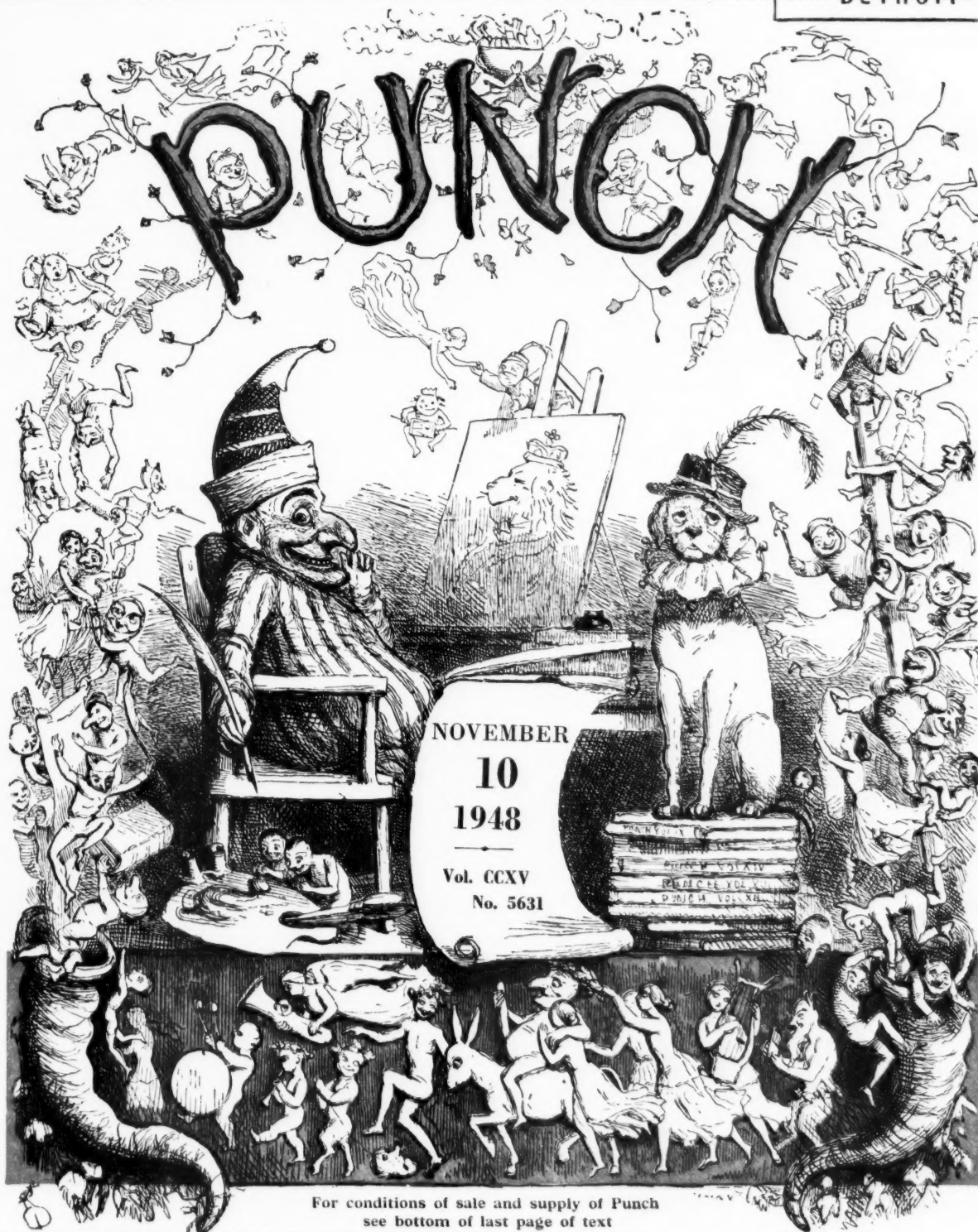


PERIODICAL

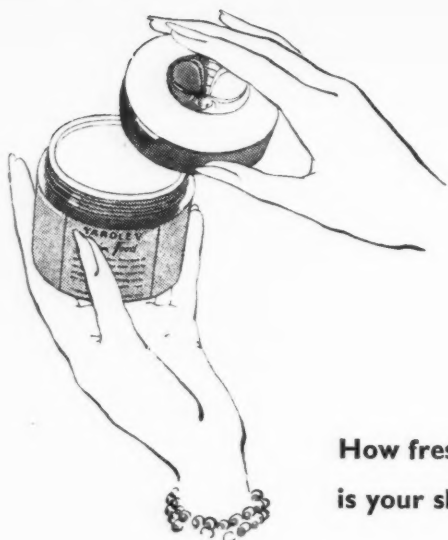
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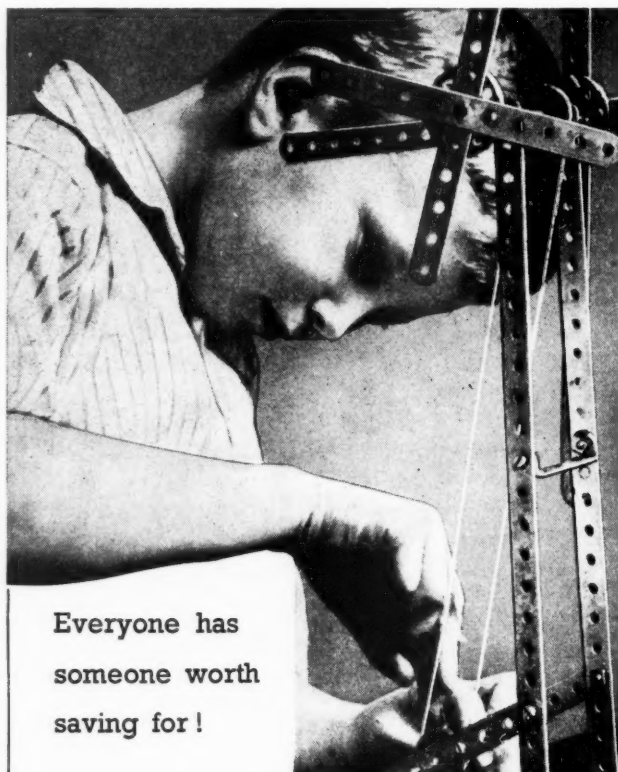
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FOR BREAKFAST



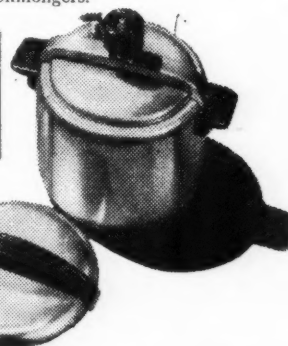
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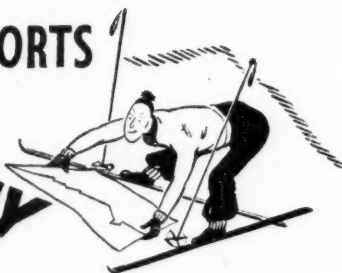
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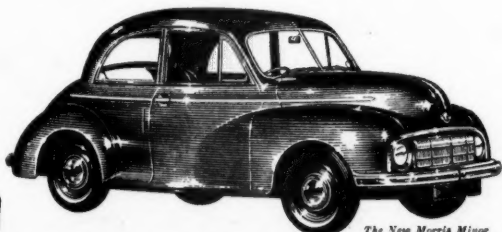
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YOU'LL LOVE IT!
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Votrix Vermouth

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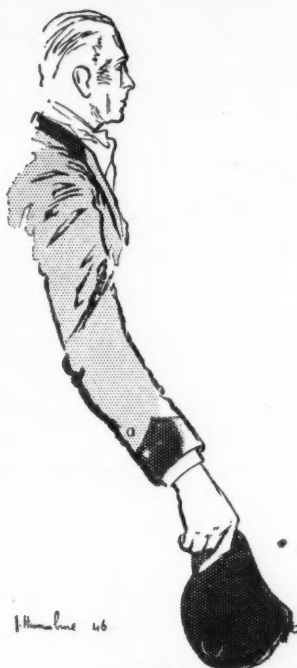
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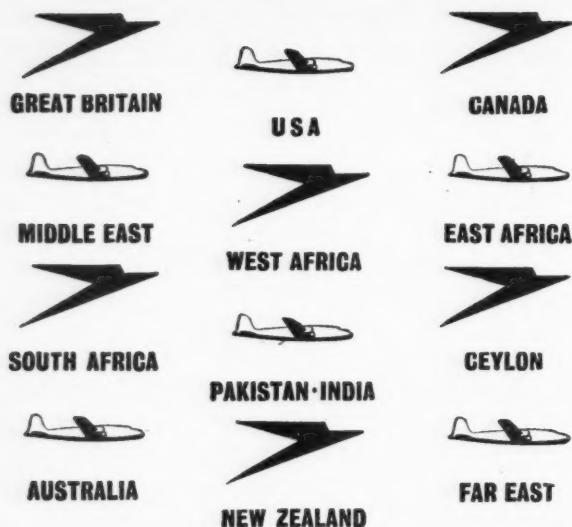


8.45 PORT to round
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You'll be glad you got

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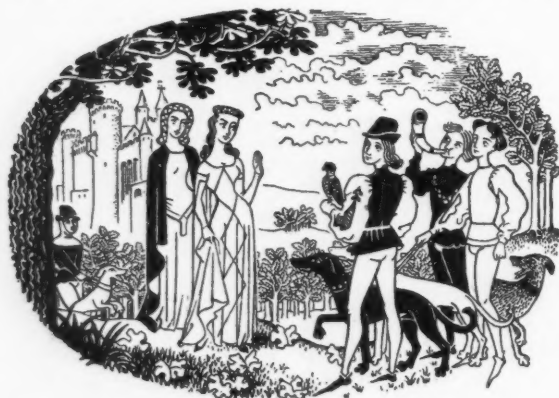


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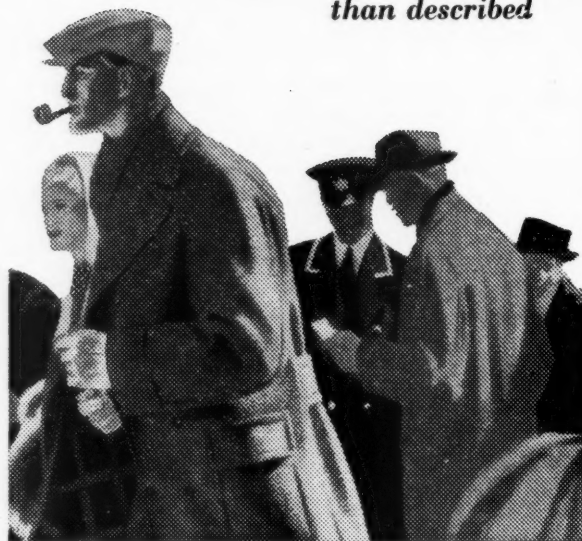
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PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCXV No. 5631

November 10 1948

Charivaria

EXTENDED hours for the Trafalgar Square fountains are announced. On Wednesdays and Saturdays dehydration does not set in until 11 P.M.

A recent fuel cut began several minutes before the official economy warning was broadcast. Many people dialled TIM to find out exactly how slow their radio sets were.

During an interview a City policeman declared that London fogs were not so thick as they used to be and did not last so long. This is simply going to make it all the more degrading to get lost in a utility one.

A visitor to the Motor Show says he was surprised to find that many of the new cars were not for delivery until 1954. Apparently he failed to notice that they were fitted with ash-trays.



"Beat egg whites till stiff."
"Daily Telegraph."

Then rub in the embrocation.

A housewife recalls buying match-boxes from a man at the door and getting short measure because he confused her by talking so much. About nineteen to the two dozen, she estimates.

"COUNTER OFFER
Shop Assistants Accept It"
"Evening News."

Naturally; they know what's underneath.

Zoo ravens are being taught to talk. A reader observes that they ought to have plenty to croak about.

Umbrellas are among the subsidiary manufactures of one big steel company scheduled for nationalization. This will pave the way for a link-up with British Railways' Lost Property Department.

The control of building materials order is being cancelled. This will increase the available supply of officials.

To keep the edge on safety-razor blades, they should, we are told, be left lying north and south. This ensures that only one edge goes west.

"Happy comfortable home offered at very low rent to officer's wife, in exchange for supervising business woman's household; accommodation for husband on leaves."—Advt. in "The Times."
Garden or tea?

A party of six ex-servicemen, who emigrated to New Zealand last month, announced that they would pay a visit to the Mother Country every five years just to keep in touch with old friends. We trust their post-war credits will appreciate this personal touch.

The request, made by nervous householders, that a policeman should be in attendance during the burning of a huge bonfire on the village green, was turned down. Sparing a Copper for the Guy is evidently a thing of the past.



The Tennessee Walking Horse

THE people who warn us about the responsibility of the Press are always thinking of political responsibility and generally envisage a conclave of newspaper lords conspiring to eject a constitutional government and instal a petty tyrant.

Very odd ideas enter the heads of newspaper lords on frequent occasions, but, fortunately for the human race, the same idea rarely enters the head of more than one lord at a time. Nevertheless the well-being of that portion of the public that can read is endangered not by newspapers alone but by all forms of printed matter. The danger is not a political one at all. It arises from the editorial predilection for printing all sorts of curious information, simply because it is curious. The appalling effects that this kind of irresponsibility can have upon the human mind is well illustrated by what happened to Alfred Honeyman when he read about the Tennessee Walking Horse.

This Mr. Honeyman was a very ordinary sort of man who knew nothing about horses at all. For many years he was the accountant for a firm of pickle manufacturers, but when the war came he felt that he would like to do something more useful, so he left the pickle firm and became the accountant for a firm that manufactured potted meat. Horses were by no means regarded as raw material by this new firm, not even as a war-time substitute, and I doubt if Mr. Honeyman had given the noblest of quadrupeds five seconds' thought during the whole of his life, save perhaps a few seconds in a remote sort of way on Derby Day.

Mr. Honeyman's wife had a sister whose husband was vaguely interested in America. He subscribed to a number of American magazines, and every now and then a bundle of these (some of them very ancient) would arrive at the Honeyman home. Mr. Honeyman was as little interested in magazines as he was in horses, but one evening he picked up a copy of *Life*, dated October 20th 1941, and read about the Tennessee Walking Horse.

The article that Mr. Honeyman read was by no means vicious. It was, at first glance, so harmless that a Child Welfare worker would have had no hesitation in giving it to one of his charges. It merely presented a few curious and interesting facts about a breed of horses called Tennessee Walking Horses. The most curious fact about these horses was that they take

a much longer stride with their hind feet than they do with their front feet.

At first Mr. Honeyman felt no ill effect from his perusal of this article. He went to bed early and slept well. But the next day, when he was sitting in his office and working out some figures in connection with a new brand of potted meat, he discovered that he could not help thinking about the Tennessee Walking Horse.

Mr. Honeyman was a methodical sort of man. As soon as he found himself thinking about the Tennessee Walking Horse when he should have been thinking about the cost per jar of potted meat he pushed his figures away from him and analysed the situation. He soon perceived that he was thinking about this horse because he did not understand why, when the horse's hind feet took a longer stride than its front feet, they didn't catch up with them and telescope the unfortunate animal. Then, having reduced this puzzle to its simplest terms, Mr. Honeyman proceeded to solve it by deciding that although the horse's hind feet took a longer stride, its front feet moved at a greater speed. With a smile of satisfaction Mr. Honeyman returned to his potted meat.

Had Mr. Honeyman left the matter at this, or had his wife put the copy of *Life* out for salvage at this point, all would have been well. But neither of these things happened. When Mr. Honeyman reached home that evening, the fatal magazine was lying conveniently near his chair, so he picked it up and had another look at the article to see how right he had been. And unfortunately he discovered that he had not been right at all. For the Tennessee Walking Horse walks with "a diagonally opposed flat-footed movement."

From the moment he read these words Mr. Honeyman was lost. He has been living with a Tennessee Walking Horse ever since. He used to let it walk about his office, so that he could observe its gait, until his potted meat figures got into a fearful muddle. He started waking up at all sorts of times in the middle of the night, trying to catch it with its hind feet in front of its forefeet. He covered all his table-cloths, his counterpanes and his wallpaper with drawings of the Tennessee Walking Horse, and his habit of staring into space for nine-tenths of the day and most of the night so alarmed Mrs. Honeyman that she sent for the doctor.

Mr. Honeyman's doctor could make

nothing of the Tennessee Walking Horse, but after three visits he got into the habit of coming all day to sit with Mr. Honeyman to see if they could work it out between them. The doctor's wife was very distressed about this, but Mrs. Honeyman told her not to worry, and advised her to hire a locum. In the end Mrs. Honeyman went to live with the doctor's wife, but neither Mr. Honeyman nor the doctor noticed that she had gone.

As far as I know they are still sitting there in Mr. Honeyman's house, trying to discover how it is that the Tennessee Walking Horse can walk at all.

Lxttxr

"Highcroft," 27 Park Road,
Langton Minor, Cornwall
19/10/1948

SIR,—I am growing irrationally angry at a habit which should, in my submission, alarm all right-thinking critics.

My allusion is to a form of journalistic contribution which has but a solitary claim to distinction, viz., that its typist-author was composing it although a vital part of his old faithful was not functioning or was missing. An illustration may possibly show most vividly what I am criticizing:

"Thx troublx, dxar rxadxrs, with this othxrwisx dxlightful old typx-writx which I pickxd up in Xssxn during my sxrvicx with thx Armd Forexs in Gxrmxny is that onx kxy is missing. Nxvxrthxlxss, I strugglx along and it's wondxrful how onx gxts usxd to it, isn't it?"

And so on, ad (almost) infinitum.

Sir, it is obvious to all that I too am having to fight against a similar handicap and, having said what I want to say without calling in aid that highly important symbol, I trust that you will join my campaign against contributors who show such a paucity of inspiration.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
JOURNALIST.

"Left in politics, Peggy is conservative in dress. Her taste lies in smart two-piece suits high-lighted with pretty blouses.

She favours dark colours and seems particularly attached to wine."—*Scottish paper*.
Why bring that up?



INSPECTING THE VAULTS



"Take these coupons round to the Fire Brigade—they're waiting for them."

Still More Relations

I SHOULD like my readers to turn their attention now to the relations between neighbour and neighbour, if only because that is what the first part of this article is about. "Neighbour," as anyone who has typed it three times in two lines will realize as never before, is a very old word meaning that even in Anglo-Saxon days people lived next door to each other. The fact that we have only to think of an Anglo-Saxon neighbour to see someone coming out of a daub and wattle hut, wearing a queer round leather cap and carrying something meant for some nearby hut, is a muddled tribute to the salt, flour, slices of margarine and hacksaws that my readers have at odd times got out of their own neighbours by looking justifiably worried and explaining the extraordinary set of circumstances Fate has seen fit to land them in. Those who have carried away their margarine on a neighbour's plate will, by the way, have been struck by what may be described, perhaps rather over-eagerly, as the otherness of other people's plates; this has little to do with either neighbours or plates, it is just one of the smaller universal experiences.

There is a tradition that townspeople, particularly those who live in flats, do not know their neighbours as do those

who live in the country; but the situation is perhaps exaggerated and certainly does not do justice to how flat-dwellers feel when a neighbour who is technically a stranger wishes them good morning, or tells them what the weather is like (by "or" I mean "and"), or points out that they are carrying a lot of shopping. Humility, keenness, flattery, a sense of having been spoken to by someone famous—none of these is quite the right definition, but my readers will have got the idea. Psychologists say that humanity is being more sensible than it realizes, for neighbours about whom nothing more is known than their names, their jobs, the size of their families and the pitch of their telephone-bell may be compared with the famous in being as much and as little a part of life.

I must say a word about the effect of neighbours' laundry-baskets on those reading them. The automatic assumption by the patron of one laundry that the patron of another has made a better choice is one of the reasons why psychologists think human nature to be what it is. The fervour with which people recommend a new neighbour to try their own laundry is another. The only other thing I have to say about stranger-neighbours is that they are often indirectly responsible for one of life's social

elephant-traps—the suspicion that we are calling someone by entirely the wrong name.

I do not think I need say much about friendly neighbours, except to mention the distinction between neighbours who are friends and friends who are neighbours, and to note that the first category can meet in a shop with no more than ordinary surprise, while the second can almost break a small shop up with reciprocal amazement.

MY readers might like to be told something about their relations with the wireless, or rather with one well-established branch of it—those weekly programmes which consist of people being funny and someone singing a song in the middle. There are several of these programmes, which gives those who like all of them many happy evenings, with a wonderful Sunday afternoon, and those who like only one or two a fine chance of disagreeing with other people. Extreme supporters live actually in the studios, clapping the jokes about things in the newspapers, but ordinary fans listen at home, sitting about and displaying what statisticians consider to be the highest degree of receptivity—an indefinable but recognizable relationship of ears and eyes to the set and the other people in the room; if necessary bending forward at an angle which does not so much cut out the surrounding talk as protest against it.

I have mentioned the song in the middle of these programmes; broadcasting experts tell us that you have to have a song because people have long since realized that the experts think they ought to like it, which is very satisfactory all round. I must also remind my readers how they sometimes feel if they hear one of these programmes for a second time; they get the idea that the people acting in it are saying words they know by heart, for no better

reason than that they are saying them exactly the same way as last time. It is the sort of thing, like the way the public sees the six pips as pip-shaped, that wireless producers are up against without having to do anything about it.

I SHALL end with some remarks on the week-end, an institution which has a close and persistent relation with people, for it occurs regularly and means that those of them who work during the week can spend at least one morning not getting up early, or, if they do, realizing that they have. The public's attitude to the week-end is specially active on Friday evening; whether or not they are going to work on Saturday morning they are inclined on Friday to set themselves some large task, something progressive directed towards the house or the garden, that they will have plenty of time for. People who go away for week-ends on Fridays spend the evening settling in, by which I mean feeling quite at home but not yet having accumulated the small jokes which give a week-end its character. Actually even the quietest week-end spent at home has a character; those who do the housekeeping can see it coming on when planning the meals, but there are more poetic factors like the weather, which is particularly noticeable on Sunday morning. Meteorologists say that they have no proof that Sunday mornings are more often fine than, say, Tuesdays, but that they are as well able as anyone to remark on a fine Sunday at breakfast.

Finally, with Sunday evening we arrive at two very distinctive features: the technique of deciding what to have for a Sunday supper—a process in which the word “just” plays a large part—and the realization, by those who go to work on Monday, that they have now reached that stage of the week-end when all the free time they have left is what they get any evening of the week. ANDE.

Many Happy Returns

OH, beautiful bunch of bananas, on sale to the old and the young,

A vision of joy to my playmates, who dream of your taste on the tongue,

Last week I was one of their number, last week I was careless and free,

But time marches on and my childhood has gone and there's no more bananas for me.

Dark was the dawn of the dread anniversary,

Ominous, terrible date,

Bridging the gap to the world from the nursery,

Sealing the débutante's fate.

Wisdom and power and fame and authority,

Prized as such trifles may be,

Won't make the greengrocer give us priority—

No more bananas for me.

Farewell to those innocent pleasures—recalled, inexpressibly sweet,

From the spot where the brook and the river relentlessly, finally meet.

What has the future to offer but peril and passion and pain?

Romance and renown as the toast of the town, but never bananas again.

Honours may crown us and dignity mantle us,

Wealth may grow fat in the purse,

Yet must we suffer the torment of Tantalus—

Suffer, if anything, worse.

Beauty may blossom, adorned like a fashion-book,

Fêted and flattered in vain,

Nothing can alter the hue of the ration-book—

Never bananas again.

But stay—are they lost for a lifetime, or is there a beacon ahead

Ere they lay me to rest in the Abbey, revered with the glorious dead?

Wrinkled and grey and rheumatic, but still with the flag at the mast,

By two-thousand-and-two I'll be back in the queue and they'll give me bananas at last.

Why should I cherish the bloom of my youthfulness,

Cling to the strength of my prime?

Nature can mark with unqualified truthfulness

Each flying hour of the time.

Moments of ecstasy, years of experience,

Heedlessly, hastily passed,

Build up the claim of the septuagenarians—

Give me bananas at last.

At the Pictures

Bonnie Prince Charlie—The Guinea Pig—Quartet—On Our Merry Way

CONFRONTED with something of the size and pretentiousness of *Bonnie Prince Charlie* (Director: ANTHONY KIMMINS) I am very much tempted to scribble on its ornate

look at, and the immense cast list is studded with familiar names a number of which surprise me, for I have no idea whereabouts in the film their owners' moments came.



[Bonnie Prince Charlie]

THE IRRESISTIBLE OBJECT AND THE IMMOVABLE FORCE

Prince Charles Edward DAVID NIVEN
Lord George Murray JACK HAWKINS

edifice some disrespectful phrase; certain other writers have not resisted this temptation. But one oughtn't to be irresponsible about these things. It is undeniable that in this picture a lot of competent, skilful and hard-working people have been doing their best, and it is not fair to jeer at their failures without trying to understand what went wrong and without mentioning the ways in which they succeeded. I didn't enjoy *Bonnie Prince Charlie*—but then I can't enjoy any historical film in which the dialogue is inhibited by the fear of sounding "out of period" and the determination to make rhetorical effects. The fact may well be that Mr. KIMMINS, who made such a good job of directing the introspective subtleties of *Mine Own Executioner*, was not at ease or even particularly interested in making a story the whole point of which is its large, simple, spectacular, adventurous flourish. We get the simple spectacular stuff all right: the straightforward story of unsuccessful adventure, decorated with dramatically flung tartans, echoing with ancient Scottish names dramatically thundered out. Most boys, I should think, will like the whole affair. But more jaded members of the audience may get the impression that nobody's heart was really in it. Its bright colours are rather muddling to

look for the reason in good acting, sound direction, an intelligent script, and a good idea. The story, as you must know, is of a Cockney elementary schoolboy planted (as a Fleming Report experiment) in a public school; RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH makes him a credible figure, and the other people involved, though most of them are types, are presented satisfyingly well. One could argue about the moral: perhaps this housemaster (CECIL TROUNCER) would never really have been won over nor this boy smoothed down, and perhaps it's not necessarily a good thing that they should have been. All the same the film sums up the case without objectionable bias, and very entertainingly.

I could write a great deal about *Quartet*, for it consists of four of SOMERSET MAUGHAM'S short stories, each handled by a different director, and

each done well enough to deserve examination. But there's no room to go into detail; I had better not say much more than that I enjoyed the whole thing and would recommend almost anyone to see it. Besides the four stories ("The Facts of Life," "The Alien Corn," "The Kite" and "The Colonel's Lady," directed respectively by RALPH SMART, HAROLD FRENCH, ARTHUR CRABTREE and KENNETH ANNAKIN) we get Mr. MAUGHAM himself in an introduction, describing his methods and gently remarking on the odd behaviour of critics. To leave unmentioned many smaller merits, the main factor in the pleasure I took in the film as a whole was the extreme smoothness and ease of the playing; the main point to criticize, I think, is the abruptness of the transition from one story to the next.

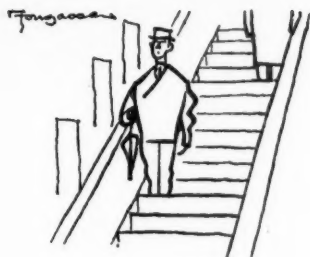
For a light-hearted bit of nonsense, a thoroughly entertaining example of "craziness" put over with great skill and intelligence, you may care to try *On Our Merry Way* (Directors: KING VIDOR and LESLIE FENTON). I found it immensely enjoyable. The episode (written by JOHN O'HARA) that shows HENRY FONDA and JAMES STEWART as a couple of dance-band men is full of magnificent fun. R. M.



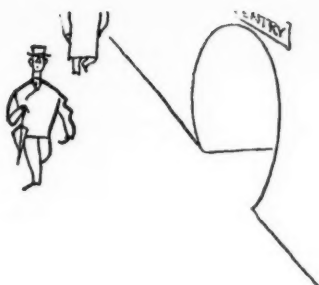
[Quartet]

NO ROOM ON PARNASSUS

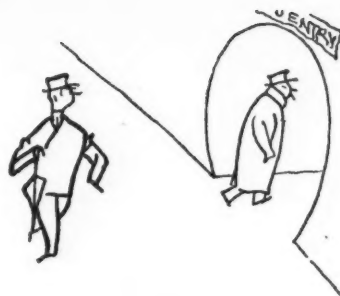
Lea Makart FRANÇOISE ROSAY
George Bland DIRK BOGARDE



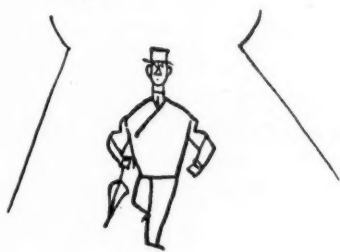
Personally, I am a law-abiding individual—



and I naturally look upon the man who disregards a "No Entry" notice—



as a moral outcast.



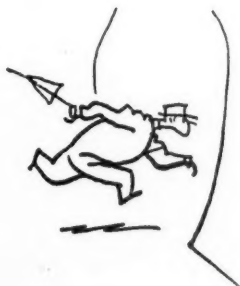
I feel, therefore, that it is my duty—



to enter a strong protest—



against the practice—



of designing tube stations—



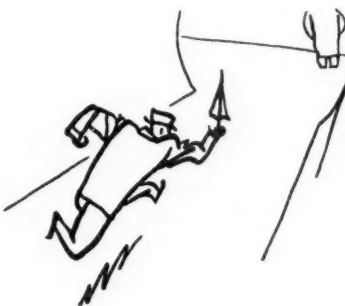
in such a way that—



however much—



I hurry—



be always—



gets to the platform first.



"At an international conference I attended recently in New York . . ."

H. J.'s Belles-Lettres

THIS Belle-Lettre deals with Heroes. I am attracted to this subject, not by any sly policy of encouraging leader-worship, nor by a *démodé* itch to debunk, but by the purely practical consideration that it has engaged several well-known pens already and can therefore be assumed to be well adapted to literary treatment. Among others who have tested the possibilities of the topic have been T. Carlyle, C. Kingsley and C. Marlowe, in the last case with Leander thrown in. (I do not myself think this is a pun, but any reader is of course quite free to gain additional pleasure by so considering it.) "No valet is a hero to his master" might well introduce a lightly learned discourse on Figaro, Sam Weller, Jeeves and Sancho Panza, the evidence being of that mixed and inconclusive kind so helpful to the essayist. That I deliberately miss this tempting opportunity is owing to my desire to hurry on to the next division of my notes, as it has N.B. written at the side, and deals with "Heroes of Bygone Days."

The heroes of dim and early times loom through the mists like oaks on mountains—brawny, self-reliant and immune to alcohol. You would not find an early hero cultivating psychological insight or a quizzical view of life. One highly-thought-of hero was Hercules, who specialized in such jobs as cleansing stables and restraining dangerous

beasts, these being now more usually undertaken by Rural District Councils. Like an Ernest Hemingway character, he took a good deal of punishment from life, getting snarled up in a contract which a better bargainer—Ulysses, for example—would never have agreed to. This Ulysses was a devious hero who took twenty years getting from Troy to Ithaca, and his deviousness made him much looked up to by the Greeks. By comparison with these bright Hellenes, Roman heroes are a little stodgy, concerned with bridges, walls and such-like. That plodding civil engineer, Romulus, with his refusal to build Rome in a day, is typical; though in his case being brought up by a wolf had probably given him a surfeit of the miraculous.

As we approach modern times (change here for King Arthur, St. George, Robin Hood, Sir R. Grenville and Peter Pan) we note a growing tendency for heroes to have hobbies. Whereas Grace Darling confined her rowing to errands of mercy and was never seen at Henley, Professor Einstein plays the violin, Mr. Churchill paints and Lord Montgomery reads in bed. No hero nowadays is really popular without some such homely side.

The contrast between heroes and heroines is instructive, or at least will be when I have done with it. The Crimean War had some of both types in it, but what a gulf separates the Noble Six Hundred from Florence Nightingale! The males co-operated with the military authorities, while the female flouted, balked and even goaded them. An army of heroes would be an inspiration to one and all and might well win, but an army of heroines would be worse than a Monstrous Regiment and would complicate chivalry no end. This English Nightingale was not content to rest on her laurels and live long and respected on the reputation of this short episode in her life. Not her! Not she! She went on and on being a heroine and lapped over into Edwardian days, still flouting, baulking and goading. Then there was Queen Elizabeth, whose reputation seems rather undeserved on close inspection. Most of the famous Elizabethan plays were written under James I and, as Mr. Belloc frequently pointed out, she was bald. Yet she got herself much commended for wearing armour at Tilbury and was called Gloriana as a tribute to her heroism. There was none of this cheap desire for unfeminine notoriety about Queen Victoria. The name Victoriana calls up not a picture of Her Majesty in a bushy but of Her Majesty in the pacific and domestic jet.

The first hero of my own I ever had was a boy at my prep. school called Soames Holmes, who wore pince-nez and claimed to be the rightful President of Venezuela. Later I fell beneath the spell of that Corinthian figure Staples IV, Captain of the Cricket XV, which consisted of those athletes not sufficiently specialized to be picked for recognized teams and was often known familiarly as "the dump." What particularly gained my devotion was not his eminence in the sporting world but his intellectual powers. While doing his algebra prep. under the desk he could take a convincing part in a Latin lesson, at critical moments interjecting stimulating questions on the master's hobby, falconry. As I have grown older I have become increasingly captious and have demanded from the object of my hero-worship high standards of largesse and encouragement. Just the offhand acceptance of a dedication would not qualify any patron for inclusion in my Pantheon, unless accompanied by a really large order for the volume. For some years now my principal hero has been a man of exemplary character, called Curly Prome. I have tested his goodness by forced loans, god-fathering the twins on to him and having him index my diary, and he has come through all tests triumphantly. We now borrow not only his mower but his garden.

Little Tim Brannehan

EITHER to deceive the Germans in case they should come, or some more local enemy, the people of Sheehanstown had twisted sideways the arms of the signpost that there is a mile from their village; and as some years later, when I came that way in a car, the arms had not yet been put straight, I asked the way of an old man who chanced to be walking by. And one thing leading to another, we got into conversation, and I asked him how things were in those parts. "Terrible. Terrible," said the old man. "Sure, they're terrible. And it's the same in the whole world, too. It's all going to ruin."

"As bad as that?" I said.

"Aye," he answered. "And worse."

"And what do you think is the cause of it?" I asked.

"It's all those inventions that they make," he replied.

"Sure, I can remember when bicycles were new. But that wasn't enough for them, and they must go on till they invented aeroplanes and wireless and I don't know what all. And no good came of it, and the hearts of men has corrupted. Listen now, and I'll tell you. Did you ever hear of the house and family of Blackcastle? No. Well, I was thinking you came from a very long way away. And once there was no country in the world that hadn't heard of them; but they're all ruined now. And it happened like this: the estates fell into the hands of a young Lord Blackcastle, that had a hard, dry, withered heart. So that was the end of their greatness, for no man can be great with a hard heart. Aye, that was the end of them. God be with the old days."

"What did he do?" I asked.

"Do, is it?" he said. "Sure, he had a hard, withered heart. What could he do?"

"Did he commit a crime?" I asked.

"Begob, it was worse nor a crime," he said. "Sure, you wouldn't mind a bit of crime in a man. He grudged a sup of milk to a child."

"He shouldn't have done that," I said.

"It's what he did," said the old man.

"How did it happen?" I asked.

"Sure, the good Lady Blackcastle, that had been his mother, died," he said, "and there was nobody to look after him then. And he went abroad, and he went from bad to worse; and he comes home, and that's what he did. Mustn't a man have a black heart in him indeed to grudge a glass of milk to an ailing child?"

"Are you sure he did it?" I asked. "And did he mean to?"

"Did it!" he said. "And mean to! Sure the whole thing's down in writing. Look now. It's in my pocket. I have it there night and day. Can you read that?"

And he pulled out an envelope holding a half-sheet of notepaper, with writing in faded ink; and, crumpled and thumbled though it was, I could still read the old writing. "Let a pint of milk a day," it said, "be given to little Tim Brannehan, since he is weakly. Moira Blackcastle."

He gave me time to read it and time for the import of the note to sink in, as he stood before me, a tall, white-bearded, reproachful figure, looking at the evidence which I held in my hand of the ruin that was coming to the world.

"He comes home from abroad," he said, "and goes into his dairy, and he stops that pint of milk being given out any more. And I shows him that very letter. And it has no more effect on him than a snowflake in the face of a charging bull or a wild lion. And you have seen the letter yourself, and a man must have a hard, black heart to go against a letter like that, written by such a lady as was

Lady Blackcastle, now in heaven among the blessed saints. Sure, the world's going to ruin."

"But when did all this happen?" I asked. "And who is little Tim Brannehan?"

"Sure, it happened only the other day," he said. And the old man drew himself up to his full height, straightening for a moment the limbs that the years had bent. "And do you think I don't know what I'm talking about? Sure, I'm Tim Brannehan. And I was never refused that milk for seventy years."

D.

Seagulls

TOSSED like celluloid by the wind's muscle
seagulls are crazily weaving;
now they fall where breaker-heads hustle
shingle, crash-taking, drag-leaving.

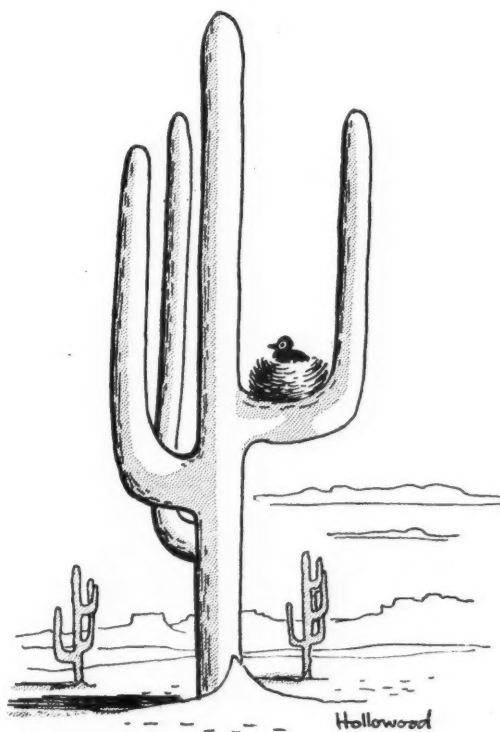
Oh, you white storm-birds, how the wind tumbles
the elegance of your wings,
tweaks your tail-feathers, whistles and grumbles,
hurls you on roundabouts, swings;

the whole wild shore drums to your screams,
yet you are elegant-pale
against the darkness; almost it seems
snow-flakes are on a West gale.

"Ladies are not allowed in the beer-garden unless accompanied by Military and Naval personnel."

Notice in N.A.A.F.I. Club in Trieste.

Not going to admit any wallflowers, are they?





BAMPTON used to be a wool town. It lies at the right-hand top corner of Devon, in a green valley pocket with hills rising sharply all round. Seven hundred years ago Bampton Fair was in full swing, and any native will tell you its roots go much deeper than that into the life of the West country. For a long time sheep were its being, until, as they went out, ponies came in—the small wild ponies from the moors, little bits of shaggy dynamite that, de-fused with kindness and patience, grow into the best friends of lucky children. Bampton Fair is still a hearty slice of the least changing part of English life, and—well, here it is . . .

"Who wants 'em, who wants 'em?"

Set you back twenty-five bob in a shop, my price twelve-and-a-kick. Could have been a tenor with the Carl Rosa, but I stuck to my duty. What is his flaming duty asks the lady over there with the passion-fruit in her hat? Bringing Art to the masses, ma'am, bringing Be-ooty to the mantelpiece of the Common Man. Come on, you miserable darlings! Let's knock off the old kybosh, kybosh being Greek for one-and-a-tanner. Eleven bob the pair!" The source of this river of oratory stands on the tailboard of a huge van crammed with plaster statuary. The look in his eye is as old as the Fair, for all the ace peddlers and pardoners and mendicant friars must also have had it. He is one of those



high-voltage persuaders who could sell you a battleship without straining himself, but at the moment he is only concerned with the figures of two apoplectic infants cowering fatly under puce umbrellas. They are not the sort of thing the Design and Industry boys would have much to say to, but they are undeniably what is wanted.

"Shall we cut the cackle and come to the 'osses?" growls Mr. Punch's Artist, fearful for his aesthetic standards . . .

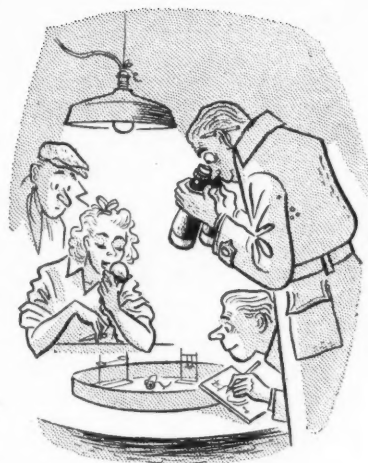
The 'osses are in a hilly orchard behind a hostelry which has magicked its garage into a grotto of mild-and-bitter. In the good old days, says an ancient in a brown bowler, speaking with marked regret, they used to be driven in from the moors in a Bacchanalian procession that frequently failed to arrive, but now, new plate glass for the Bampton shop-windows being hard to come by, they are brought in lorries. The first ponies are just being decanted outside the pub. They shoot up the cobbled alley like bullets, to stop short, quivering, in the yard. We are almost the only human beings they have seen at close range, and who shall blame them for not disguising their dismay. The fatherly giants of the Devon Constabulary, however, murmur to them exactly as if they were lost children, and, greatly soothed, they trot into a paddock giving on to the sale-ring and a number of wooden corrals. At the gate a vast compère roars to the officials farther up: "Porlocks coming!" or "Half a dozen Withypools!" with a

social gusto unsurpassed by any butler in Belgrave Square. . . .

As the sale starts heavy rain drives in bitterly from the north-east, whipping the ground to mud and faces to match pillar-boxes, but the folks have come prepared, in stout coats and every variety of war-like relic. Farmers who could still sit for Tenniel, gipsy lords with long hair and big gold rings in their ears, gay old ladies bustling in their best tweeds, the lean anonymous men who hang always on the fringes of the horse, small-eared girls whose fathers have been bullied into saying yes. A wonderful crowd, sharp, humorous, helpful, and determined to enjoy itself. Two charming little Hawkrider ponies skip into the ring, and the auctioneer goes briskly into action. Down below a satellite shouts up to his official pagoda: "Two male suckers, sir!" at which Mr. P.'s A. and I exchange glances of alarm until a man in gaiters breaks it gently to us that a sucker is a yearling. These two go for four pounds ten apiece, roughly the average for the sale. Lower than last year, but still too high, we are glad to hear, for butchers to be much interested. Before the war a pair of ponies sometimes went for fifteen shillings. There are few of the genuine mealy-faced Exmoors here to-day, because Arab and Welsh stallions have muddled things up a good deal. Or so they say, sitting beside us knowingly on the fence. . . .

As if this were really another England, the licensing laws are banished. We can almost hear the mail-coaches rattling in from Ilfracombe into the yard of the largest local, which plies a tremendous trade all through the day to a lively company thawing out shoulder to shoulder in the hall. But two things must be noted: one, no drunks, and the other, what a big part is played by tea and sandwiches when there is no ugly pressure from the clock. Indeed, you could almost believe we were as self-controlled, thus given the chance to show it, as those unlicensed foreigners . . .

Going to the fun-fair we plough slowly through the main street, packed on both sides with merry-go-rounds, dart-booths and stalls loudly offering everything from cockles to monkey-wrenches and from pants to a supremely desirable device for simulating the bark of a dog. A stalwart who talks his way out of a mass of chains and padlocks only falls silent when four large men begin a tug-of-war with a rope fastened round his neck; and a gentleman warns us squarely from the dicky of a very nice motor-car that Hitler will be back again shortly, reinforced by the goodwill of most of the major



planets. There is also a sprinkling of cattle and sheep, and occasionally a gipsy boy goes by, showing off the paces of a life-sized horse, but to-day the little pony is king. . . .

Fun-fairs grow duller, I think, as they grow grander and more mechanical. But the Dodgems are surely one of the few triumphs of our dim age. After Mr. P.'s A. and I have bumped one another black and blue, and shot the tops off a lot of defenceless bottles, and turned our backs on principle to Hoop-la, we fall happily into a flea-circus run by a ring-mistress of consummate artistry. The last flea-circus I saw was in Vienna eleven years ago. It was good, but, believe me, these British fleas are something to be proud of, less temperamental and altogether more nimble. They ride tricycles, and fight duels, and flip about so giddily on the trapeze that personally I could watch them all night . . .

By tea-time the last sale has been made, and now for a delirious hour or so we are treated to a free-for-all rodeo as each buyer goes into the corrals to fetch out his purchase. Few manage it single-handed, and most are glad to enlist the help of local lads, working in teams. With some of the wilder ponies it becomes a matter of all-in wrestling before halters are on and they are successfully cozened down to the waiting lorries. Now and again one of the bigger fellows breaks loose, and then the apple-trees blossom with a heavy crop of under-insured spectators. . . .

There's a great deal more we could tell you about the glories and the rich English comedy of Bampton Fair, but the best thing you can do is to go to it yourself. Just remember, the last Thursday in October. ERIC.





"Ah, yes, I saw it in the papers—'High-speed escalators for London Tubes'."

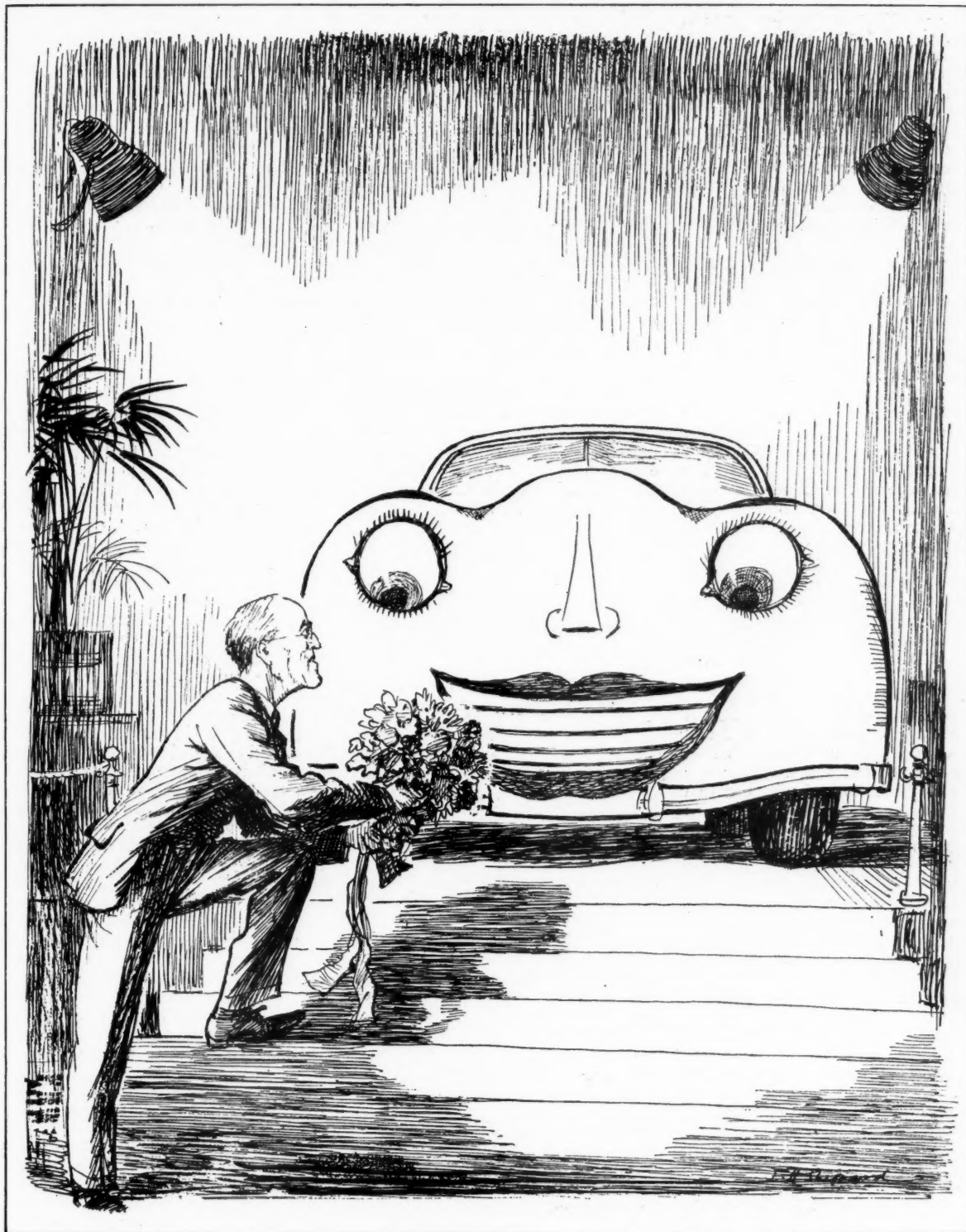
Off Harwich

THE ferry-boats come and the ferry-boats go
From Harwich old Town to Felixstowe
And from Felixstowe to Harwich Town
With its houses and streets all tumbledown.

I wonder if folks who come to stay
At Felixstowe for a holiday
Think as they stroll round Harwich Town
Of the nights when the bombs came crashing
down,
When the searchlights cut through the smoke and
glare
And the cordite stunk in the Market Square.

When packed up tight on the ferry-boat
Do they ever think of the ships afloat,
When Orwell and Stour in a merry glee
Dance on their way to the chill North Sea;
When St. Nicholas white on a thundery sky
Watches the great ships sailing by,
Do they see where the sparkling waters meet
The long grey ships of the Cruiser Fleet?

When they laugh and sing on their holiday
Do ever they think of that fateful day
When battle-scarred through the salt sea foam
The *Lion* and Beatty came limping home?



MISS EXPORT 1948

MONDAY, November 1st.

—Whether it was the approach of Guy Fawkes Day, or the fact that the newspapers are already beginning to announce that there are "umpteenth shopping days to Christmas," something had caused the House of Commons to throw off much of the air of depression and listlessness that has marked its proceedings for the last week or two.

It may of course have been some pre-knowledge of what Mr. JOHN STRACHEY, the Minister of Food, intended to say later in to-day's debate—and of which more anon. Whatever the cause, there was an almost joyous air about the place, and even Sir WALDRON SMITHERS, the "Profit of Whoa!" as Socialist critics are apt to call him, seemed just a thought less sad than usual. Question-time went by with a swing, and the famous song in Mr. HUGH DALTON's heart seemed to have become a full choral work, shared by all his fellow-Ministers and even the back-benchers on the Government side of the House.

Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS, continuing the debate on the Loyal Address in reply to the KING's Speech, was seen at one stage to smile—an event which almost startled the House. He expressed the view that things could be worse (adding hastily that they could also be better) and delivered a few well-chosen words of warning about the evil and corroding effects of Communism in both the political and the economic spheres. This drew a loud cheer from nearly all parts of the House (with a few notable silent spots) and Sir STAFFORD left it at that. He did mention, however, that Britain is doing surprisingly well in that most exacting and exciting of all races, the Prosperity Stakes. He even seemed, at one time, to give a faint impression that *steaks* might not be too far out of reach soon.

As though fearing that such hopes—deferred—might make the national heart sick, Mr. STRACHEY, when his turn came (just at dinner-time), hastened to say that meat was the one thing that would have to remain severely rationed—because, said he in his emphatic way, there simply was not the meat in the world, even if we had the cash to pay for it.

However (and here his supporters leaned forward eagerly, anxious to miss no verbal crumb from his table), he was able to promise *some* ration concessions. Hastily suppressing the cheer which rose unbidden to their lips,

Impressions of Parliament

Monday, November 1st.—House of Commons: The Address Debate Continues.

Tuesday, November 2nd.—House of Commons: Mr. Hugh Dalton in Action Again.

Wednesday, November 3rd.—House of Commons: Vote on the Address.

Thursday, November 4th.—House of Commons: Quiet Week's End.

Members listened while the build-up went on. Before he got to the concessions the Minister went through the entire Government-advertising "spiel," omitting only the normal mention that he had stood in that there marketplace for twenty years.

And then the concessions. Mr. STRACHEY held, so to say, a magnifying-glass up to Nature in presenting them, and the Labour Members, used to being thankful for even small mercies, gave him a rousing cheer as each was listed. Mr. ANTHONY EDEN and Sir THOMAS DUGDALE, on the Opposition Front Bench, wore the

had just announced. However, Sir THOMAS said, a little dividend was better than nothing, and he flicked a modest cheer across the Table to the Minister on his own account.

TUESDAY, November 3rd.—Mr. ROB HUDSON, easily the most trenchant speaker (Mr. CHURCHILL excepted) on the Opposition benches, "had a go" at the Government to-day. He moved an amendment to the Address based on a complaint that the Government had "obstinately persisted" in nationalization plans when so many more urgent matters shouted for attention. Mr. HUDSON prudently offered no prizes for guesses about the authorship of the phrase in quotes, for Mr. CHURCHILL's name was among the amendment's backers.

Mr. HUDSON was not entirely destructive in his criticism; he also offered some practical suggestions. One of these was that Mr. ANEURIN BEVAN, the Minister of Health, should be "sacked" as a first step towards getting some more houses. Another was to get rid of a good many controls and restrictions to give enterprise a chance—a request granted, with surprising speed, by Messrs. WILSON and STRAUSS later in the week.

Mr. HUGH DALTON replied at once for the Government, making it clear that the sacking of Mr. BEVAN, at any rate, was not in contemplation. Perhaps remembering that The Fifth was fast approaching, Mr. DALTON added a trifle wistfully that he had expected a different speech from Mr. HUDSON—"more fireworks and animation." The disappointment seemed to sadden Mr. DALTON, and his normally booming voice fell to a comparative whisper—so much so that some of his friends were moved to appeal to him to "speak up." This unusual plea stirred Mr. DALTON to announce in more ringing tones that civil aviation was the only nationalized industry actually *costing* the taxpayers money. Deficits in other nationalized industries were explained by the fact that the workers were now, for the first time, getting a "square deal," which, naturally, cost money.



Impressions of Parliamentarians

58. Major Milner (Leeds, South-east)
Deputy Speaker

expression of the tramp who said: "Thank you for these few cakes—but they *are* few, ain't they, lady?"

With a metaphorical fanfare heralding each increase, Mr. STRACHEY announced: 1 oz. more cooking-fat (2 oz. instead of 1) for sixteen weeks from December 5th; sugar ration up from 8 oz. to 10 a week; jam and marmalade rationing to end on December 5th; the sweet ration to go up from twelve to sixteen ounces a month—with the cheaper varieties off ration in the New Year; some more sugar for manufacturers of biscuits, jellies, ice-cream and so on.

As soon as Mr. STRACHEY sat down,



"Sir, you are hereby notified to sign on at the Employment Exchange every Wednesday and Friday at nine a.m."

The debate then went into a decline and drifted on until closing time, when it was suspended until

WEDNESDAY, November 3rd, when it was due to reach its climax in a vote, to which the rival forces had been summoned by imperious three-line Whips.

Not even Mr. CHURCHILL is able more consistently to draw a big House than is Mr. BRENDAN BRACKEN. Mr. B. does not bother about trifles like eloquence, and he sprays his speech with slang expressions and "wisecracks"—but (as the old song used to have it) he gets there just the same. His speeches might well be delivered from a machine-gun, so staccato are they—and, to the unwary political foe who is unwise enough to raise his head over the parapet while the firing is going on, the results are about the same.

To-day Mr. BRACKEN carried on the war over the Loyal Address and made the most of his all-too-rare chance to make the enemy squirm. His wit is far too sharp, he is far too quick on the verbal draw, for anyone to risk interrupting him—much—and he had a relatively quiet hearing. He announced that the nationalized industries were costing, and were going to cost, the

taxpayer a pretty penny, and that the whole thing had been done merely to feed the ego of—guess whom?—Mr. ANEURIN BEVAN (for long Mr. BRACKEN's black spot) and several other members of the Government.



As a rule

Impressions of Parliamentarians

59. Mr. R. S. Hudson (Southport)

And Mr. BRACKEN did not think it was a particularly worth-while procedure to spend so much on the sustenance of so unimportant an "animal" as an ego.

The only Minister able to meet

Mr. BRACKEN on his own ground is Mr. HERBERT MORRISON, and in due time he entered the lists. His wit is as swift and sharp, his command of slang as extensive, his sense of humour (and of fun, which is even more important) as keen, as Mr. BRACKEN's. So, one way and another, they had a fine time, with Mr. MORRISON winding up in a House that seemed more crowded than it has ever been in the whole course of history.

The result of the division on the Conservative amendment showed, in fact, that the Whips on both sides had performed a great feat of organization, for the figures were: 359 for the Government, 195 for the Opposition. Which, as a demonstration, was not bad.

THURSDAY, November 4th.—

To-day's chief excitement was the announcement, in written parliamentary replies by Mr. WILSON, President of the Board of Trade, and Mr. STRAUSS, Minister of Supply, that a number of controls were to be relaxed, doing away with the need for about 200,000 licences and permits a year. Otherwise it was a dull day in the Commons, devoted to the discussion of one or two not very important Bills.



"Dammit, I gave 'em a suit to clean midday yesterday."

Letter from a Saint

123-7 CHIVALRY LANE, E.C.3
10th November, 1948

To the Clerk to the Parish Council,
Chowberry-cum-Oforth

Subject: DRAGON IN BUNCE'S WOOD

SIR,—I am in receipt of your telegram regarding the widespread devastation being caused by the above-mentioned monster and shall be pleased to take the action you suggest immediately I have your Council's assurance that the regulations bearing on incidents of this type have been complied with. Perhaps you would be so good as to furnish me with information covering the following points:

(1) Has a permit to slaughter the

dragon been obtained from the Ministry of Food? If not, application should be made immediately to your local Food Office.

(2) Does the dragon breathe fire and smoke? If it does, it will be necessary to obtain from the Ministry of Fuel and Power a certificate to the effect that it is redundant as a heat-producing unit. Failure to do this can have very serious consequences.

(3) You should, if you have not already done so, report the infestation to the Pests Officer of your County Agricultural Executive Committee. The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries are shortly issuing a pamphlet on *The Dragon in Health and Sickness*, and these rare creatures may

not now be slaughtered until the local Pests Officer has had a reasonable chance to study their habits.

(4) There is a brisk demand for dragons and their accessories in America, where collectors will pay very high prices for a good specimen. In view of this it has now been decided that a permit to slaughter (see para. 1, above) will not be issued until the Board of Trade has granted an export licence for the carcase. You should therefore apply for one immediately.

(5) You must notify the Ministry of Town and Country Planning of the dragon's appearance, as the possibility of further dragons harbouring in your district in the future will naturally have a bearing on development values and may necessitate a measure of rezoning.

(6) If the dragon is capable of becoming airborne you should report its presence to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, giving at the same time details of any distinctive markings so situated on the wings or chassis as to be readily identifiable by ground-to-air observation. This will minimize the risk of its landing on one of the Ministry's airfields and obtaining an unauthorized clearance.

(7) Under the Tarascon Convention His Majesty's Government are bound to notify their co-signatories of the appearance on British territory of any dragon in respect of which the original owners may wish to initiate proceedings for extradition. You should accordingly send particulars of the creature to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who will circularize the diplomatic missions concerned.

(8) The Act forbidding serving members of H.M. Forces to participate in cruel sports appears to obviate the necessity of taking any action in respect of the Service Ministries, whose capacity to assist in the elimination of this scourge would be limited to the employment of psychological warfare. Experience has shown that dragons are immune to this.

As soon as I hear from you that the formalities outlined above have been completed I shall be glad to give the matter my personal attention.

I remain, sir,

Your obedient champion,
ST. GEORGE

(Managing Director, Merrie Englande
Deinfestation Services, Ltd.).

o o

Expert Opinion

"Any valuer will tell you that assets costing £800,000,000 before 1947 are worth vastly more to-day."—*Sunday paper*.

The Night of the Big Power Cut

WE have now suffered our first power cut of the winter. It hit us last Sunday night in the middle of a Bach fugue and a bit of picture-framing. We don't necessarily prefer our Bach this way, but Sunday night is always picture-framing night and it wasn't our fault that there happened to be something rather good on the Light programme. Anyway, there we were, hammering rickety parallelograms into sturdy rectangles, salvaging rusty tacks from perished cardboard, snipping at our new prints to make them fit, and listening to the delicious contrapuntal harmonies. In fact it was at the very moment when Melling remarked, "Boy! Just listen to those delicious contrapuntal harmonies!" that the light went out and the fugue fused. The time of the incident was fixed, we discovered later, by the electric clock which stopped at precisely twenty minutes past eight.

"Stay exactly where you are," I said, "until I have procured a light."

It was a wise command, for the floor was littered with sheets of glass and fragile framing equipment.

"There's a night-light in the nursery," said Hilda, "somewhere."

Placing one foot in the middle of Renoir's "Woman in the Yellow Dress," I made my way to the door. I moved confidently, the recollection of my bat-like efficiency in the old black-out sharpening my senses. I grasped the knob and stepped smartly into the book-case. As the pain subsided I heard Melling urging me to strike a match—advice which he subsequently repeated whenever his ear detected a sound of falling furniture, ceramics or humanity in the far reaches of the house. He did not know of course that I was nursing my last match to ignite the night-light. . . .

We sat in semi-darkness and silence for a long time. Then Hilda jumped up and ran through the Monet to the window.

"Why, it's not a power cut after all," she said. "There's a light in the Coopers' drawing-room."

"There's a light in *this* room," I said.

"An electric light," said Hilda.

"Six or seven candles, if you ask me," said Melling.

"I happen to know," said Hilda, "that those curtains are of heavy brocade. It's just a fuse, I tell you. And I can prove it. I'll bet you the power's still on."

Disregarding our counsel she went

off to fumble with the vacuum-cleaner and the toaster. She was soon back.

"You win," she said, shattering the Toulouse-Lautrec under her wedge-heel. "What do we do now?"

"Bed," I said, "is the best place."

The time would be about ninety-thirty. . . .

I don't know whether it was the low sound of their voices or the more strident whirring of their drill against the lock of my desk that woke me. Anyway, I sat up in bed and was instantly in full command of my faculties. I slipped out of bed and down on my knees. Then, very carefully, I crawled across the landing and into the guest-room. Melling was fast asleep and snoring heavily. I had to think quickly. To rouse him suddenly in the black of night would mean a long and possibly noisy explanation, and any noise additional to his rhythmic grunting would warn the burglars and cover their escape. I saw, too, that any sound *less* than his snoring might well have the same effect. My plans were made in accordance with these findings.

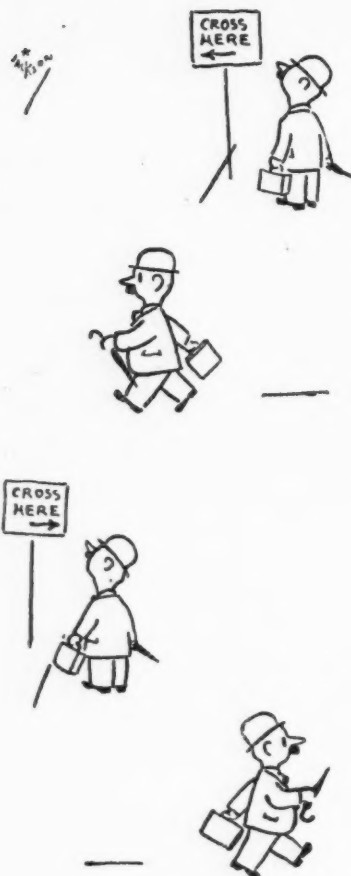
At the very moment when I clapped my hand over Melling's mouth I began to substitute for him as snorer. If anything my snore was slightly more

resonant than his, but I got the timing right—one minim of rugged vibration, a bar's rest and a syncopated snuffle on the crocheted down-beat—and I hoped that any dissimilarity of timbre would pass unnoticed. Unfortunately the stratagem was ruined by a misunderstanding. Melling bit my hand—very hard. Then while I was trying to suppress a scream of agony and simultaneously to keep the snoring alive he swung a cruel blow into my face. It travelled barely six inches, from the eiderdown to my chin, but I went down clutching at the bed-clothes, with a ferocious Melling on top. Only Hilda's timely appearance saved me from permanent disfigurement. The intruders got clear away of course.

At least that's what I say. Melling and Hilda both maintain that there were no burglars. Their story is that the restoration of electrical supply at or about 11.30 P.M. set the radio and the vacuum-cleaner working and that the rest of the night's work was fostered by my feverish imagination. But if there were no burglars how do they explain the litter of broken glass and ruined prints in the drawing-room? I keep asking them that, and all they do is look at each other and force me back on to the pillows. Hod.



"My boy saw the Show last year."



Pig-Keeping

WE decided to keep a pig. We learned that first of all we had to register the pig with the Ministry of Food and then register ourselves for monthly allocations of pig-meat. We learned that we had to undertake that the pig would live regularly on our premises and be fed and tended by ourselves or by a living-in member of our household. ("Fed," it was explained, meant "being served with food at feeding times.") We learned that we had to make a declaration of intention to slaughter, and when the hour struck apply for a licence to slaughter. We learned that slaughtering was only to be done by a slaughterman approved by the Food Office, the nearest being twenty miles away. We just about decided not to keep a damn pig after all.

Then we thought of rashers of bacon by the half-dozen, of ham, of lard, of . . . We bought the pig—and are now what you might call Capitalists.

My son and I and our Mr. Friar built a sty. The pig arrived. That, by the way, is the correct order of events. The reverse constitutes a Grave Problem. The sty was built at the farthest end of the garden, because. As a result we couldn't get the trailer in which the pig arrived anywhere near the pig-sty, so we had to carry it. The pig, not the trailer: a trailer hasn't got two convenient ears and a tail. The pig squealed in high falsetto chords all the way, till we felt like three approved slaughtermen. It wasn't from pain or even fear, though—sheer resentful indignation tinged with reproof.

The pig was installed in the sty and in its first five minutes ate two cabbages the size of footballs, supplied by my two daughters and causing bitterly jealous argument. ("Daddy, it ate mine first!"—"Daddy, it liked mine best!")

Next came the naming of the pig, which in our household means voting-papers and cold war, culminating in a rough-house something like free democratic elections in Eastern Europe. The name emerged as "Penelope." The real choice had been "Pygmalion," but certain vital facts about our pig had for the moment escaped us, and the emendations, "Pygfeemalion" and "Galantea" were over-ruled. The runners-up were "Low Pressure," because she was always in the trough—closely followed, because she looked like a Rumanian Cabinet Minister, by "Mrs. Pauker." "Gadarene Gertie"—my contribution—was howled down.

Now the basic idea of pig-owning of course is that for some months you keep a pig and then for some weeks the pig keeps you. There are, however, certain misconceptions about the business in the lay mind. One is that you just feed a pig on "scraps that come out of the house." Try mentioning that to your wife some time. Grey with insulted fury, she'll explain to you that if you think she's such a bad housekeeper that anything eatable is thrown away . . . Well, you soon see her point, probably long before she's stopped explaining it. At meal-times the phrase "I wouldn't give that food to the pigs" occasionally recurs to your mind with quite a new interpretation.

Another misconception is that a couple of meals a day during which the pig eats itself silly and treads in the rest is all that's required to fatten it. Our Mr. Friar soon disabused me. Our small sounder is being cosseted as never animal was before. It has a few tasty odds and ends, turnip and what-not, thrown in first thing in the morning before it gets up. During this, its breakfast is being boiled up. Mr. Friar

doesn't actually wear a chef's cap and taste the brew at intervals, but he comes very near it. At midday it has a cabbage, not from the old bed we eat ourselves, but from the better bed, the ones we don't even send to the church Harvest Festival. It has another painful of, I must confess, extremely savoury-smelling "goo" at four P.M. And last thing at night it has another cabbage as a snack before retiring—its night-cabbage, as it were.

In between it is expected to lie down and growl, not rush around the sty exercising its hams and rashers away to nothing. Luckily a pig has, situated somewhere about a foot back from the shoulder and six inches down, a kind of switch or button, which on being scratched with a stick slowly folds the legs up under it and makes it collapse with a satisfied grunt. Mr. Friar likes one or other of us to stand by during meals to work the undercarriage button when the pig is ready.

Mr. Friar watches the pig with an eagle eye. He says it's getting a nice straight pig now, a good square pig, he says. One morning he reproachfully mentioned that it looked a bit hollow-sided and accused me of having failed to give it its snack of cabbage the night before, when it was his afternoon off. He even moved the whole chicken-run one day to another part of the garden. I understood the pig was being upset by the chickens. The continual clucking and the occasional peans of feminine triumph over a dear little new baby egg were disturbing its afternoon nap and interfering with the gammon-growing. If they still talk loudly enough to annoy the pig I expect we shall have to give up keeping chickens.

Meanwhile I have made my own personal contribution. I picked a peach which was going bad and so had been spared by my daughters, and solemnly gave it to Penelope. She ate it—stone and all—with a noise like a bilge pump; so early next year, we hope, we shall be offering visitors a slice of genuine peach-fed ham.

I say we hope. But already I can see storm-clouds. And the moment we have obtained our licence to slaughter they will break. "Daddy, you can't murder Penelope!" "Daddy, I forbid it!" "Daddy, she's the darlingest pig: I love her!" "Daddy, you're horribly cruel!" And we shall by then have undertaken to surrender fifty-two weeks' bacon coupons. A. A.

Uncalled-for Remark

"Christadelphian Hall, Suffolk Street.—6.30; Mr. G. W— (Mumbles)."
Birmingham paper's list of church services.

Around Galleries

A LARGE number of people have already seen the collection of Danish art treasures at the Victoria and Albert Museum; a great many more, no doubt, are still deferring their visits, and some will certainly wish to go again, for towards the end of a range of twenty-one rooms "the eyelids are a little weary" and impressions tend to become confused. Let me briefly draw attention to a few items which deserve more than a cursory glance, and are worth noting for a rapid point-to-point hunt.

To my mind Claus Berg's carving of "The Virgin Crowned by Christ" (122) is the most moving of the mediæval groups from Vindinge Church, which reflect in various degrees the feeling and craftsmanship of the Nuremberg school. In the Renaissance room (a homage to Christian IV) Abraham Wuchters' finely posed and sensitively modelled portrait of the King's son Ulric (156) arrests the eye, which is drawn again, further on, to Jens Juel's "The Artist and his Wife" (299) an exquisite piece of realistic portraiture painted in 1791. The grave serenity of Vilhelm Hammershøi's low-toned portraits of the 'nineties is probably a

truer expression of the Danish spirit than the moods of most of the modern artists here; certainly his works (637-41) impress me more than the canvases which reveal a number of French influences.

Gallic exuberance, on the other hand, is a mood which seems a natural expression of Patrick Heron's temperament. This young artist, who is holding a show of his paintings at the Redfern Gallery, Cork Street, paints with a fine frenzy which is communicated even to a rather cautious oldster. No doubt the knowing proprietors of the Galerie Maeght or the Galerie Creuse would smile a little indulgently at works whose homage sometimes to Braque, occasionally to Matisse, is at times so naïve; quite possibly the artist himself will regard them indulgently when he is thirty. Indeed, that is most likely, for Heron is already beginning to develop a more personal style and outlook, and the influence of Braque is fast waning. Meanwhile, it is enough to say that he paints with the passionate conviction of youth; and though I couldn't live happily with more than two or three of his pictures, I am bound to admit that I find the cup

of home-brewed *chocolat* he provides rather refreshing after a basinful of native gruel.

Really the Royal (and ancient) Society of Painters in Water-colours needs a little rejuvenating blood. One might very well keep a notice of any one of its exhibitions in standing type, merely ringing up the printer from year to year with instructions to delete "Old Ships at Dinard" and substitute "Old Women of Dinan." The names of a dozen stalwarts and the phrase "conscientious craftsmanship" could warm the hearts of readers year after year. In the current Autumn exhibition at 26 Conduit Street characteristic contributions by Sir W. Russell Flint, Leonard Squirrell, Claude Muncaster, and Charles Knight (names that I hope will long remain standing) save the show from complete mediocrity.

N. A. D. W.

"Swansea's defence was badly rattled in the first half by the eager Weston and his backs had to boot Norwich forwards and several times the ball out of play."

Sunday paper.

The ball too? What a game!



OUR sense of the dramatic has seldom been better served than when the news of Mr. ALASTAIR SIM's election as Lord Rector of Edinburgh University came through five minutes before the opening at the Westminster of *The Anatomist*, in which he was to play Edinburgh's notorious *Doctor Knox*. It was as happy a coincidence as if some *Macbeth* had dashed to the theatre from being acquitted of murder at the Old Bailey, but it was not the sort of thing calculated to steady the equilibrium of a first night. Mr. SIM, whose dressing-room one imagined to be a scene of kilted frenzy, did well in trying circumstances, and by this time he is no doubt doing very much better. I never saw Henry Ainley's *Doctor*, but it seems clear that Mr. SIM is tackling the character from a different angle, as indeed, with his flair for the sinister, was almost inevitable. Where Ainley started more innocent than he was proved, it is now the other way about; a permissible variation, perhaps, but Mr. SIM needs to make clearer the exact culpability of the *Doctor* in accepting for his laboratory bodies still warm from the fingers of *Burke* and *Hare*.

These smooth-tongued gentry are played with a really horrible cynicism by Mr. LIAM REDMOND and Mr. MICHAEL RIPPER, and the scene in the tavern where they lure the wretched *Mary* to her doom is admirably done, though Miss MOLLIE URQUHART gives the girl too much rustic charm, for she is, after all, a trollop and not a farmer's daughter straying on her last evening into bad company. If an award were to be given for the best stage drunk of the year (not an Oscar, but a Falstaff) then my vote would go unreservedly to Mr. GEORGE COLE for his brilliant study of the successive phases of intoxication as *Knox's* young assistant. Few actors can give more than a conventional impression of this most elusive of human experiences; Mr. COLE not only gets its baffling philosophic high-lights but also contrives to suggest a conviction of exquisite mental clarity struggling with a mounting incapacity

At the Play

The Anatomist (WESTMINSTER)—*That Mighty Heart* (EMBASSY)—*These Mortals* (PEOPLE'S PALACE)

of tongue. Although I felt that *Amelia* calls for less delicate metal, it was pleasant to see Miss ALEXIS FRANCE again, and as *Raby*, the honest Dobbin of the dissecting-room, Mr. DEREK BLOMFIELD gives a neatly comic performance. The play needs no commendation; as everyone knows, it is amusing and exciting and rich with Mr. BRIDIE's robust fancy. Production by the Lord

like rabbits in damp basements we have no right to be surprised when some of the younger rabbits break the law in their attempts to escape. Daughter of a Cockney slum family, the heroine is an intelligent girl embittered by her struggle to climb out of the hutch. A married man seduces her, and at the end she goes off to an abortionist with five pounds stolen by her slippery brother. Miss MARY MACKENZIE, a young actress of feeling, makes her a proud and pitiful figure. The father is a boozy wastrel, the mother a slogging Lambeth matriarch whose riotous return from the local forms the only colour in a drab day. Here Miss BERYL MEASOR accomplishes wonders of tragic blowsiness and careworn comedy. Add to these a prim elder sister—taken with sound observation by Miss MARY KIMBER—let down on the eve of her wedding by a decent fellow suddenly fearful of being dragged himself to the rabbit level, and you have the main strands of a play which is loosely put together but which deals convincingly with human beings. And that is greatly in its favour.

The People's Palace in the Mile End Road is by no means as inaccessible as you might think, and it is good news for a wider circle than E.1 that a resident company is to work its ample modern theatre. I don't think Mr. H. M. HARWOOD's *These Mortals*, a diffuse play with a cast still enormous even after the abstinence

(owing to censorship and other troubles) of Queen Victoria and Greta Garbo, was at all a sound choice for a beginning. Fun and games on Olympus have been better done, so has the Trojan business, and not until the third act does *Zeus* abandon Much-Binding for a serious and witty address to the great men and women of history, assembled in the smoking-room of Hades.

The company is at present very uneven, but Mr. NIGEL PATRICK, Miss UNA VENNING, Miss IRIS BAKER and Mr. ERNEST JAY do much to stiffen it. The last-named's Lenin would pass even in Red Square.

ERIC.



[The Anatomist]

FIRST AID TO THE SURGEON

Amelia Dishart Miss ALEXIS FRANCE
Dr. Knox Mr. ALASTAIR SIM

Rector himself, which can scarcely be anything but a theatrical record.

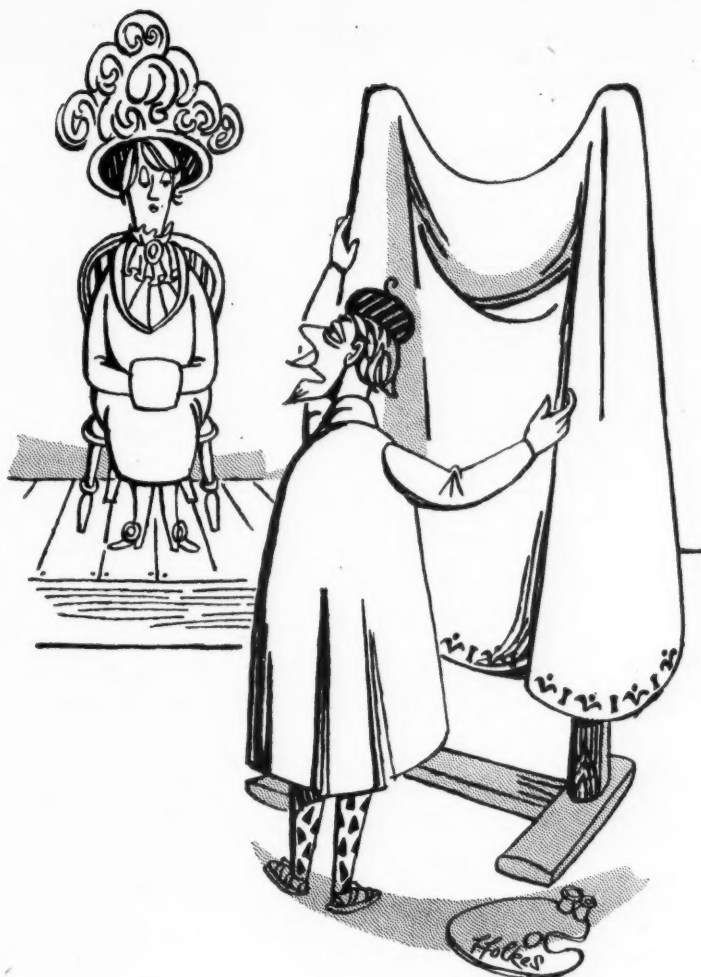
Plays by actors are often generous in individual opportunity, and almost every part in Mr. AUBREY DEXTER's *That Mighty Heart* has some good point of character to bite on. The biting is not always effectual in Mr. WYNDHAM GOLDIE's production at the Embassy, but even so the play comes out a more genuine and interesting article than many reaching the West End. It deals sympathetically with the domestic background of a current type of English pick-up girl, and points the moral that so long as large families live

At the Opera

Simone Boccanegra (SADLER'S WELLS)

SADLER'S Wells Opera has given us a treat in presenting *Simone Boccanegra*, an opera by VERDI, hitherto unknown in this country. An excellent English version has been made by NORMAN TUCKER, who has done all he can to elucidate a plot which beats even *Il Trovatore* in complication.

As in *Rigoletto*, it centres upon a father, a daughter, a crowd and the working-out of a curse—or two overlapping curses. *Simone Boccanegra*, the first plebeian to be elected Doge of Genoa, is the object of one and the pronouncer of the other. But whereas in *Rigoletto* the threads in the web of fate are always clearly visible and the pattern they weave gathers strength and definition until the inevitable tragedy is revealed, in *Simone Boccanegra* some threads are left loose, some are severed when the pattern is half completed, while others almost break under the strain as they are forced into place. The most powerful scene in the opera is the one that VERDI entirely re-wrote in the late version—the scene in the Doge's sombre council chamber, where the political strife between patricians and plebeians is both the background for, and epitomized in, *Boccanegra's* personal drama. Here the principals, chorus, producer and designers (JOHN PIPER and JOHN MOODY) have alike risen magnificently to VERDI's conception; and here for the first and only time in the opera the character of *Boccanegra* in his white mantle comes triumphantly to life, dominating the whole drama and everyone in it—the mob that bursts in, his would-be assassin *Gabriele*, his daughter *Amelia* in terror for them both, the warring scarlet-robed counsellors and *Amelia's* suspected abductor *Paolo*. The climax of the scene is the curse that *Boccanegra* publicly lays on the abductor, a curse in which he forces *Paolo* to join. This is a truly wonderful scene, and compensates for the dramatic weakness of the preceding garden scene which, though it contains some delightful music (in particular the Cavatina for soprano), loses its way in a maze of dramatic complication. Mr. TUCKER has straightened out some of the tangle; but, willing as we are to assume an excessive gullibility in operatic characters, we cannot believe either that *Fiesco*, knowing that *Amelia* was a foundling, could have failed to put two and two together and discover that she was his long-lost granddaughter, particularly as she wore her mother's portrait round her neck; or



"Were you wearing that hat last week, Miss Humphreys?"

later that *Gabriele*, if his desire to murder *Boccanegra* to avenge his father's death was but reinforced by his fury at *Boccanegra's* supposed rivalry for *Amelia's* affection, would fall upon *Boccanegra's* neck in a fit of hysterical remorse when he found that he was after all his prospective father-in-law. His hand is stayed and his remorse obviously engineered with an eye to the splendid terzetto that follows for soprano, tenor and baritone.

Again, are we meant to see the hand of Fate, and the working-out of *Fiesco's* curse in the Prologue, in the poisoning of *Boccanegra's* wine by *Paolo*? And is *Boccanegra*—people's champion, seducer, pirate and murderer—in the last resort a hero or a villain? Were Doges in the fourteenth century in the habit of making ceremonial calls upon young ladies of rank at dawn?

If so, and the young ladies whiled away the chilly hours of waiting by singing charming cavatins about the moonlight shining on the sea, were all the birds in fourteenth-century gardens in the habit of bursting into full song in the dark? For this is what the music suggests. Or were they all nightingales?

All these fuddlements rob the drama of its immediacy. There are in the opera beautiful arias for soprano, tenor and bass which should achieve wide popularity; and if the splendid music, splendidly sung as it is by JOYCE GARTSIDE, JAMES JOHNSTON, HOWELL GLYNNE and ARNOLD MATTERS, the excellent production and one scene that represents VERDI's genius at its height can together carry the weaknesses of the drama, *Simone Boccanegra* will take its place among the greatest Sadler's Wells successes. D. C. B.



"So you've grown out of that tell-my-father nonsense, Maydew. Bravo!"

Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Transatlantic

It is just a century since Mr. Hannibal Chollop of Eden City assured Mr. Mark Tapley, late of The Blue Dragon, near Salisbury, Wilts., that it required "An elevation and A preparation of the intellect" to understand America. Since that contact many currents have crossed the Atlantic. Gold and art treasures have gone west. Lend-lease, fiction and films have flowed east. And for seventeen years Professor D. W. BROGAN has written on *American Themes* (HAMILTON, 12/6) with all the intellectual equipment postulated by Mr. Chollop, plus an over-riding sense of common human values which renders him willing and able to do justice to both parties. The method of his thirty-nine articles—one is a broadcast—is more or less Macaulay's. He takes a current book: on front families, a gangster or a president; or a series of books on some such burning if banked-down question as "The Negro Dilemma"; or a theme of his own discerning, "Have the American Rich Overplayed Their Hand?" and produces half a dozen to a dozen pages which leave you—as all essays should—with curiosity both assuaged and piqued. He is seldom inspiring, but he seldom lets you down: and this from an elevation carefully scaled to be equally acceptable to the deflated Chollops and Tapleys of both sides.

H. P. E.

A Philosophy of the Short Story

Mr. SEAN O'FAOLAIN expounds the art and craft of *The Short Story* (COLLINS, 10/6) with the authority of an accomplished practitioner. But he does a good deal more than that. He has a philosophy of his theme.

Technique, as he sees it, is "the least part of the business." Before you can learn to write you must learn to live. You must come to terms with experience, establish an equilibrium between your innate personality and the accidents of your milieu. And this cannot be done without conscious and even strenuous effort: a point on which Mr. O'FAOLAIN quarrels with his countryman "Æ." Of this equilibrium, this integrated ego, the short story is, in prose at any rate, the supreme expression: the short story that matters, that is to say, for Mr. O'FAOLAIN freely admits that there are others. The novel may be more objective, may harbour material which its author has not completely assimilated: the short story is either a personal expression or a triviality. Mr. O'FAOLAIN gives body to his thesis with penetrating studies of three masters of the art: Chekov and Maupassant, almost of course, and, less expectedly but to excellent purpose, Alphonse Daudet. Then he condescends to consideration of the technical problems of construction, subject, language and so on. On these he has much that is suggestive to say, but the pith of his argument lies in his introductory chapter. A little anthology of illustrative pieces, ranging from the masters already mentioned to Elizabeth Bowen and Hemingway, concludes a stimulating, and provocative, essay in criticism.

F. B.

Henry James and Robert Louis Stevenson

As Miss JANET ADAM SMITH shows in her excellent introduction to *Henry James and Robert Louis Stevenson* (RUPERT HART-DAVIS, 12/6), Stevenson and James had much more in common than the superficial dissimilarity between them suggests. In spite of occasional attempts, culminating in the journey to Samoa, to immerse himself in life, Stevenson was, owing to his ill-health, almost as much of a recluse as Henry James, an unmarried expatriate with a comfortable private income. Both were highly self-conscious and, as appears in the correspondence between them which forms the main part of this volume, immensely preoccupied with questions of style and presentation. "The Polonius and the Osric of novelists" Thomas Hardy called them, an unkind but not altogether unjust characterization, for James and Stevenson, like Polonius and Osric, tend to have more art than matter, more flourish than point. There is, however, much that is interesting and delightful in these letters, and particularly in James's. Stevenson's other friends resented his marriage, but James realized that Mrs. Stevenson was actuated in her jealous guardianship of Stevenson not merely by possessiveness but by the need to protect his failing strength from all unnecessary strains. His tact and understanding melted Mrs. Stevenson, and though her opinion of him ("He seems very gentle and comfortable") might have been qualified had she known his opinion of her ("Poor lady, poor barbarous and merely instinctive lady"), this book gives the impression that James, though not the most ardent, was the most sympathetic of Stevenson's friends.

H. K.

Common Fare

"Sufficient culture," it has been said, "can be hung up to any sufficient trade"; and it is perhaps because sufficient trades have vanished that sufficient culture has vanished too. Fifty years ago the English farmer's was a sufficient trade, and its cultural heritage has been fortunate in its chroniclers. Mrs. ALISON UTTLEY has taken up Miss Jekyll's pen to describe the household gods of her father's farmhouse: possessions known to be useful and believed (with justice) to be beautiful. *Carts and Candlesticks*

(FABER, 8/6) describes, in a baker's dozen of honestly ecstatic appreciations, the treasures, and some of the pastimes, that gave a country childhood its warmly enduring afterglow. "Country Fare" is poignant reading, not only for its description of home-made food but for the ungrudging and ungrudged hospitality that made the gipsy's portion as acceptable as the guest's. The family was tenacious of old ways. They not only used their warming-pan—the author's task was to light it on its bedroom rounds with a candle—but that fabulous object of domestic antiquity a salamander. Mr. C. F. TUNNICLIFFE might have drawn us the salamander. But he has given us a fox and a stoat worthy of Bewick, two charming old candlesticks out of Mrs. UTTLEY's remaining one-and-twenty, and a score of pretty things besides.

H. P. E.

A Coven in the Cotswolds

Andrew Lang said of the Campden Mystery of 1660, which has consistently baffled historians, that at the back of it there was not a glimmer of reason or of sane human nature, and that its occurrences were to all appearances as motiveless as the events in a feverish dream. It was certainly a strange story. William Harrison, a much respected septuagenarian of Chipping Campden, disappeared, and after the discovery of his blood-stained hat his servant confessed to the murder, and was hanged, with his mother and brother. Later Harrison turned up again with an extraordinary yarn of being kidnapped and kept as a slave in Smyrna. In *The Silver Bowl* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 8/6), a novel which uses the familiar methods of detection and adds to them some neat historical reconstruction, Mr. HUGH ROSS WILLIAMSON ingeniously suggests that earlier in his life Harrison, who had travelled for his merchant master, had stolen the mystic bowl of Smyrna, believed by many to have been in England during the seventeenth century. This explanation seems to fit the case, and it gives Mr. ROSS WILLIAMSON rich opportunities to describe the local magic that riddled England with an efficiency that smacks of the N.K.V.D. and numbered among its converts the high and the low. Connoisseurs of necromancy as well as those who like their crime with an unusual flavour should find this exciting book much to their taste.

E. O. D. K.

Henry Nevinson

Henry Nevinson, who died eight years ago at the age of eighty-five, was a special correspondent of a kind that to-day is almost unknown. Growing up in a leisurely age, he became a good classical scholar and a profound student of German. Steeped in the Liberal tradition, he sided with every kind of under-dog, from sweated workers in the Black Country to the victims of the Portuguese slave-traders, and from Greeks fighting Turks to Irishmen struggling for an independent Ireland. With his Liberalism was mixed a desire for travel and adventure, which sent him round the world rather as a spectator of stirring events than as an actor in them. Half-way between a poet and a man of action, he was too restless for literature and too contemplative to apply himself to practical achievement. In *Essays, Poems and Tales of Henry W. Nevinson* (GOLLANCZ, 18/-) Mr. H. N. BRAILSFORD has made a representative selection from Nevinson's writings. The result is a very interesting volume, with an unusually wide range of subjects—short stories in Cockney dialect, an account of the Messina earthquake, meditations on the passing of the horse and the realities of war, farewells to Fleet Street and to America, and studies of Goethe, Heine, Meredith, Swift and the Irish poet Synge. Nevinson is always readable.

He seizes at once whatever is picturesque in a man or in an event; but, with all his charm, he is too volatile to sustain the comparison Mr. BRAILSFORD makes between him and Hazlitt and Lamb.

H. K.

Here is the Country.

The countryside here in England is a fabric with a very deep pile: looking down into it one finds not only the expected continual interplay of animal and vegetable life, age-old geological stories, ancient customs touching practically every country activity, but, besides much more, humanity preserved in history or anecdote or growing before our eyes to-day. Something of all this, a cross-section of the countryside, is given in *The Countryman Book* (ODDAMS PRESS, 10/6), for, as its second title proclaims, it is "A Selection of Articles and Illustrations from *The Countryman*," and it has been made by that periodical's founder and first editor, Mr. J. W. ROBERTSON SCOTT. Here one may go "Out of Doors" with four Prime Ministers, or read nine authors upon country cottages, find the Duke of Bedford making an enchanting subject of spiders and harvest bugs, or learn the story of our last witch, Jane Wenham of Walkern. There are poems, for instance Miss W. M. Letts' charming thing "The Rector's Grace," and there are finely reproduced photographs and drawings; there is practical advice for the gardener, besides many other good hints, and, splashed here and there throughout the book, are excellent scraps of country wisdom, wit or folklore. In a word, this is the country as nearly as it has ever been captured in print and bound between two covers.

B. E. S.

Two years have passed since the first publication of *Queen of To-morrow*, Mr. LOUIS WULFF's authentic study of H.R.H. Princess Elizabeth. Now comes a new and completely revised edition (SAMPSON LOW, 12/6) bringing the story down to the greatest occasion of her life, the Royal Wedding.



Of Being Earnest

A WOMAN crossed the street and joined the crowd on the pavement, congested under a scaffolding. 'I need,' she said, 'a hat and food of course, and more hope in my life.' A man passed her, thinking, 'She has no cares. I have all the cares.' A woman, another woman, looked at the first and at the man and said, 'The sort that want for nothing. Look at her gloves!' A child played with a stone in the gutter. Another child looked vacantly on, afraid to join in, waiting for his mother. Time passed.

"The first woman said, 'I would prefer that man to my husband. But he would prefer another woman.' The man said, 'She has poise: my wife has none. But Eileen is warm and she is not. I want someone different from either.' The second woman said, 'They should both be killed, because they have what I want.' The child said, 'My life is dust and ashes. My pebble has gone down the sink.' The watching child mourned, 'He is free.'"

I had got so far with *Refuse: A Portrait of Our Times* when the odd thought occurred to me: Perhaps it's a trifle gloomy? No *joie* in the *vivre*? I read it again. No doubt about it, it was gloomy.

Now why, I thought, do I write gloomily about life? I put down my pen and fell into a fit of abstraction. Time went by with a prolonged moan. I shook off the fit with the cheering thought that there's always suicide and started again.

"Foredone and foredoomed are all our plans," said the first woman. "The wounds we bear cripple our initiative. We fail because imagination quails..."

It didn't seem to be getting any better. This will not do, I thought. At this rate I shall have nothing in hand for the climax. I flicked over my notes to the upshot. Under a leaden sky, X stands on a bridge over a canal by the gas works. . . . Too late the postman pushes the letter through Eileen's door. . . . The eyes are sightless . . . the quiet hiss of escaping gas.

It would mean lightening the start, that was clear. The end could be thought grey.

But life, I said, it ties my hands. I would be gay, yes gay, if life were so. "Refreshed with mortal hate"—the note caught my eye—"the husband and wife sat down to supper." There you were, you see; the son a shady shop-keeper; the daughter passing for on the stage; the old aunt thwarting the nice sister's hopes. That was life. And the husband and wife glowering over

supper. One can only tell the truth even if it hurts.

The reverie this thought engendered lasted the better part of an hour. I came to with a start, the familiar walls putting out of my mind the white-washed plaster, the barred window and the cell-door through which . . .

Some people do write comedy, I thought. They do. They abandon their minds to it, I suppose. What treachery! As if comedy could be true.

What if I took my own opening and gave it a happy turn? What would my readers think? Let me see . . .

"A woman skipped across the street and joined the crowd on the pavement, mingling under a scaffold. 'I need,' she said, 'a hat and food of course. I can do without hope.'"

Well? It bordered on the hearty, but perhaps it was too soon to judge.

"A man passed her, thinking, 'She has no cares. I swear I have no cares either. Ha! ha!'"

An inch farther and all were levity. See, now—

"A woman, another woman, looked at the first and at the man and said, 'The sort that want for nothing. Look at her gloves! Perhaps they should not be killed because they have what I want.'"

No: no self-respecting author could measure out such careless rapture.

I crumpled the pages in my hand. Truth, I said, though the reader die for

it. If there be any sources of sober mirth let me use them, any earnest jest let it be mine.

But I have to admit there isn't and my pages grow sterner, my figures more fated and my events more melancholy.

Life is like that, isn't it? Or—stop—surely, surely, it can't be me?

o o

The New Look in Ecclesiology

I AM what Mr. Betjeman would call a church crawler and withal a tetchy man bristling with views on pews, altars and psalters, hassocks and cassocks, processional crosses and reredoses.

I am what the Art Historian would call a Neo-Victorian. being highly allergic to hangings of Mothers' Union blue (but don't praise me for the phrase) and preferring the deep blush of dusty plush.

I am the mourner in the Children's Corner, but I could dance for joy on aisles of encaustic tiles.

I am numbered among the folk who detest unpolished oak and love the sticky feel and smell of varnished deal.

My spirit yearns after memorial urns and the flamboyant bust of the just, the just-so and the just so-so.

To me in part is due the boom in the Nineteenth-Century Tomb, in spires by Butterfield and choirs by Gilbert Scott, not forgetting the huge interest in Pugin and the fact that you may have had a few offers this year for your Landseer and your grand and great-grandmamas's vases.



"Stop, alleged thief!"



"That's right—keep them away from the traffic."

The Business of Gladys Colander

MUMMY! Mummy, what can you do when people have *silly* ideas? Well, I mean when their ideas are all *wrong*, and they *vote* all wrong and they won't see how silly they are? What *can* you, Mummy? Oh, Mummy, what are you making? Will there be a bit left over—enough for me to make a pasty, do you think? May I, please?

Mummy, we had an idea that was simply *wiz*: it was a Secret Society—well, Christopher and me, and Martin and Hilary, and we had it in Martin and Hilary's garden, in the shed where their father keeps tools and paint and things, and there's an old push-chair that's broken and a toboggan in case it ever snows again. Mummy, do you think it *will* snow this winter? Well, do

you *expect* it will? Well, do you think it might *perhaps*?

Our Secret Society is called O.S.S., or you could say Oss, all together—*Oss*. If anyone said to you *Oss*, what would you think? Well, if you *didn't* think they were mad what would you think? You wouldn't possibly know what it meant, would you? *Oss*. Isn't it nice, *Oss*? Mummy, is this bit of pastry left over? May I have a bit more flour and roll it out, please?

We had to decide who to be things, like Martin being President; and I'm the Treasurer, Mummy, in case we ever have any funds; and Christopher is the Secretary because of writing best, and he has to write down everything that happens in a book. Mummy, did you know that what happens in a meeting

or a secret society or anything like that is called a *minute*? Why do you think it's a minute, Mummy—I mean, however long it takes, still to be a minute? As soon as it's in a book it's only a minute. Hilary said she didn't want to be just a meeting all by herself and she had brought Gladys Colander. Gladys Colander—she's just a friend of Hilary's she imagines, and Martin said he was sick of Gladys Colander, she was always everywhere and she couldn't come, and Hilary said she *had* come, she'd been there all the time, and Martin said well, take her away, and Hilary said she would go away herself, and Christopher said we had to have *somebody* in the ordinary audience part of the meeting, and Hilary said then we ought to be pleased to have Gladys

Colander, and Gladys Colander didn't like any of us and she and Gladys Colander were going away and they'd tell *everybody* about our beastly Secret Society. Mummy, do you think I've rolled this out enough yet? May I have some *raspberry* jam to put in it, please?

Mummy, I said if she stays and we can't see her what does it matter? Because I wanted to get on with the *signs*. Well, our *signs* that we were all going to have. And Hilary would keep on saying she *could* see her, and Martin said well, he didn't mind if only she'd keep quiet, because he'd just remembered about the signs too. So then we had to decide about the signs and we all voted. Well, Mummy, they're so that when you see our signs you'll know we've been there and they'll point the way we've gone. Martin chose a balloon on the end of a string, just a wiggle going up and a circle at the top. So we all voted whether he could have a balloon and we all voted he could. Christopher had a thing like noughts and crosses with a circle and a cross in the middle. Mummy, guess what I had? Guess. May I lick the jam-spoon, please? Guess. I had an arrow with a lovely tail with feathers sticking out.

Well then, Mummy, what do you think Hilary wanted? Nobody would ever think. She said "I want a dead Indian." And we all shouted "*Red Indian*," and she went on saying "*Dead Indian*." Martin said "No, it's *Red Indian*," and she said "It's a *dead Red Indian*." Christopher said "Why?" and she said why did he want a

noughts and crosses thing? So Christopher said well, let her have it, but how could she ever draw one? So, Mummy, she just drew a *straight line* along the paper at the bottom and said it was a dead Indian and we all said *Red*, and she said *dead Red*.

So we voted and it was all settled and we were just beginning to plan a Secret Feast with a lot of things to eat, when Hilary said Gladys Colander wanted a wigwam. Martin said Gladys Colander can't have *anything*, unless it's an invisible one, and Mummy, it was *me* that had a good idea, it was the best idea anybody had all the time to stop Hilary talking about Gladys Colander, and my good idea was for Hilary and Gladys Colander to have their signs *together*, a wigwam and a dead Red Indian, like an upside-down V for a wigwam and a stroke along for a dead Red Indian—a sort of triangle, Mummy. Don't you think it was a *good* idea? And then we could all think it was all Hilary's and *she* could think it was partly Gladys Colander's if she liked. Mummy, wasn't it a *good* idea for me to have? So we all voted very quickly, and Hilary said she and Gladys Colander voted against it, but Martin said three had voted for it and it was a rule, or else she could go away and Gladys Colander too. And Christopher said he wasn't going to write all that down in a minute, he couldn't remember it, and anyway whoever knew how to spell a word like *Colander*? Mummy, is this all right to put in the oven now?

Hilary would keep on saying Gladys Colander wanted it written down, and

Martin got up to say something very furious about Gladys Colander and he leant against the old push-chair and although it's broken it suddenly ran backwards and knocked into Christopher and Christopher went sort of sideways to get out of its way and a pot of paint that Martin's father had had, all bright blue, all of a sudden turned right upside down on the floor with the lid off. Martin said "It *can't* have the lid off; I put it back." It was only on the floor, Mummy, and then Hilary said it had fallen on Gladys Colander. And Martin said well, Gladys Colander had better clean it up, and I said I didn't see how you could have a Secret Society when people kept on having such silly ideas, and Christopher said he knew what he would write in the book, he had seen it in the newspaper, he would write "General uproar." Mummy, it will be an exciting sort of first minute for O.S.S., won't it —"General uproar"? Mummy, I'm just going to make an arrow, with gold paint, and stick it on cardboard and cut it out. Could you call me about when it's time to take the pasty out of the oven; could you, Mummy, please?

○ ○

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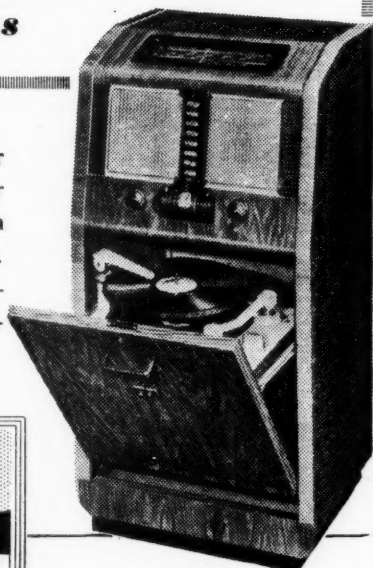
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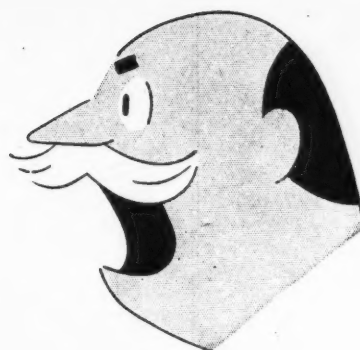
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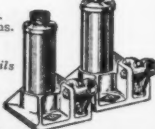
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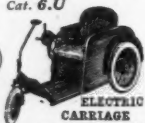
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Its aircraft insulator gives quicker starts, more sustained power, more miles to the gallon. No shorting, no cracking, points last longer.

3 Use the AC Plug Service regularly

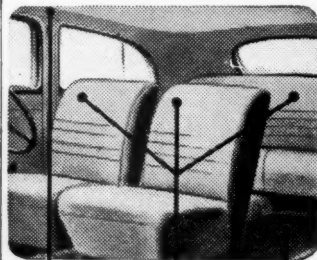


Drive into any official AC Plug Cleaning and Testing Station at regular intervals and have your AC plugs maintained at "factory-fresh" efficiency.

Sponsored by the makers of

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WITH AIRCRAFT INSULATOR



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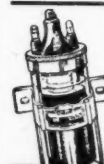
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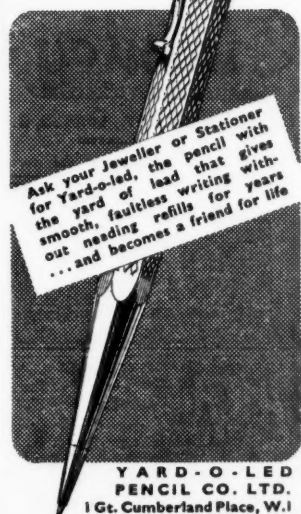
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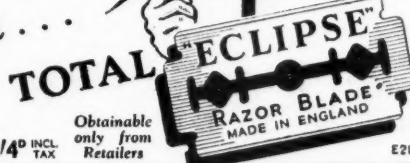
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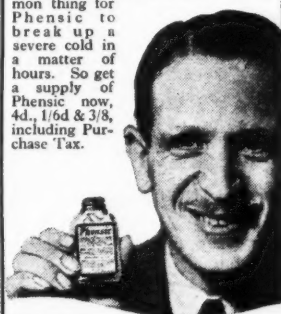
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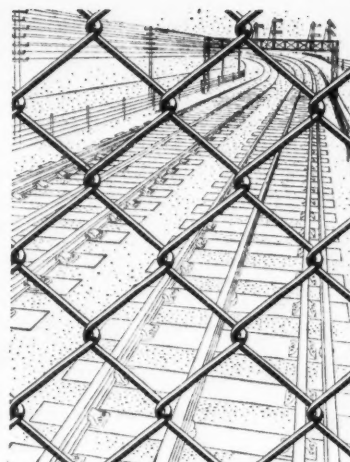
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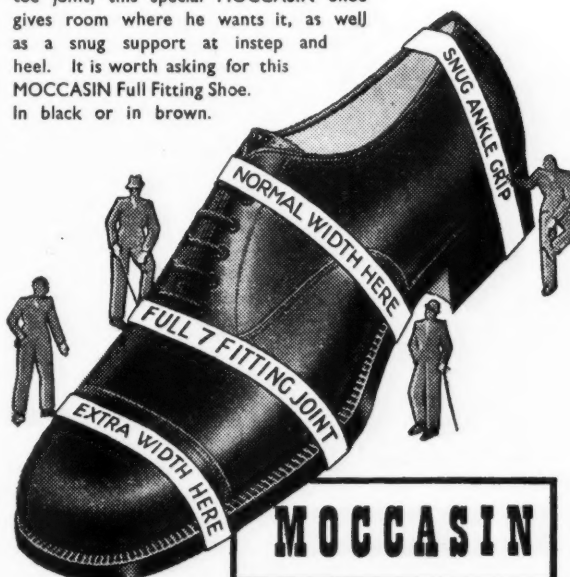
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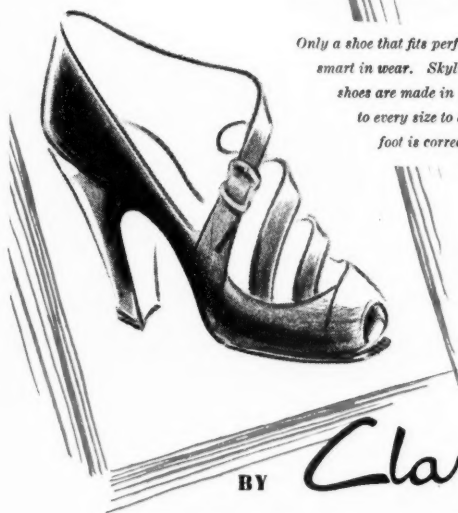
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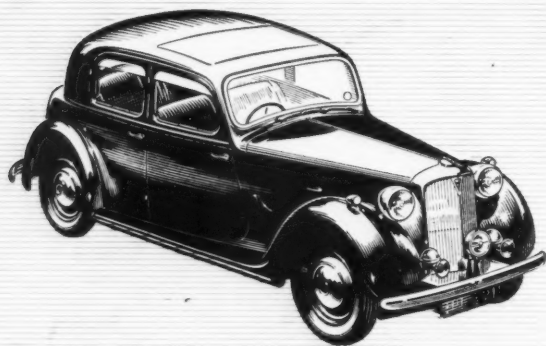
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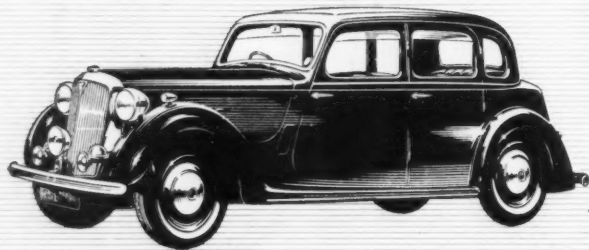


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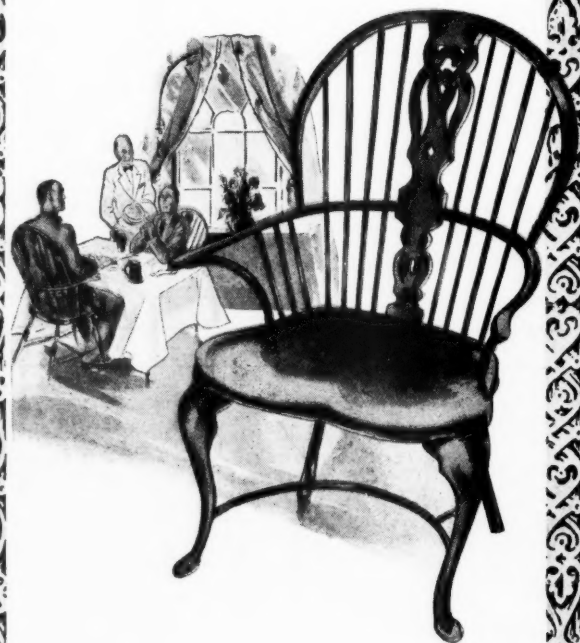
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